

# Transforming Our World

## Literacy for Sustainable Development



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Institute  
for Lifelong Learning

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## Literacy for Sustainable Development

Selected case studies from  
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Front cover image: "Training Farmers in Bangladesh", S. Mojumder/Drik/CIMMYT / CC-BY-SA, 2011

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*Literacy is indispensable to raise awareness and gather necessary grass roots participation in our efforts to improve the way we care for our planet and manage its resources. This transformation can only happen if society's most vulnerable youth and adults acquire basic literacy skills that equip them with the knowledge and confidence to improve their own lives and build more resilient communities.*

Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, on the occasion of the 2015 UNESCO Literacy Award Laureates announcement, 22 July, 2015

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# Introduction

The post-2015 development agenda sets 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 167 targets. These are integrated and indivisible and seek to balance the three crucial dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Over the next 15 years, these goals and targets are expected to stimulate action in five crucially important areas: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. People are at the centre of sustainable development. However, sustainable development cannot be realized without educated people. Education has long been understood to be the key to sustainable development.

There is strong evidence of the wider benefits of education, particularly in reducing poverty (UNESCO, 2011). Education helps mothers improve their children's nutrition (UNESCO, 2013), while better-educated people are less vulnerable to health risks (UNESCO, 2011). Education enables girls and women to reach their full potential (Psacharopoulos and Patrinos, 2002), and is one of the strongest drivers of economic progress and prosperity (UNESCO, 2013). Educated people are more likely to understand, support and create solutions that ensure the development of sustainable cities and communities, as well as to use energy and water more efficiently and to recycle household waste (UNESCO, 2013). People with higher levels of education show greater concern about the protection of the environment. . Studies have also shown that education is an essential foundation of peace, tolerance and a healthy civil society (*ibid.*; UNESCO, 2012). In short, progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will be limited unless quality education is available to all.

SDG Goal 4 intends to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'. This implies that all people, 'irrespective of gender, age, race or ethnicity, including persons with disabilities,

indigenous peoples, children and youth in vulnerable situations, should have access to learning that helps them acquire the knowledge and skills needed to exploit opportunities and to participate fully in society' (final draft of the outcome document for the UN summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda). Given the immense challenges to sustainable development that humanity currently faces, we cannot afford to focus only on the education of children. Over the next 15 years, access to quality education, and the development of a culture of learning to support it, will be crucial for children, adolescents, young people, adults and older people alike.

It is particularly important that vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of people are empowered through access to relevant knowledge and skills, in order to help end poverty and hunger and to address the challenges of supporting people in living healthy lives, promoting gender equality, and ensuring the availability of water and sanitation and access to decent employment and work, to mention just a few. Long before the launch of the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005–2014) and the debate on the post-2015 education agenda, sustainable development was recognized as a core objective for adult learning (Mauch, 2014). The importance of non-formal and informal learning, particularly with regard to changing attitudes and behaviour, has been stressed in relation to all three dimensions (or pillars) of sustainable development. The rights-based approach to literacy and education advocated by UNESCO (UIL, 2009), and the prioritizing of marginalized groups, is clearly in line with the SDGs' focus on addressing social inequalities. Economic empowerment and environmental sustainability – the other two pillars of sustainable development – have also been present in the content of adult literacy and learning programmes over past decades and are far from new to the field of adult literacy and education

(ASPBae, 2012; Hanemann, 2005; Robinson-Pant, 2014).

The literacy programmes featured in this publication are drawn from every region of the world and testify to the central role of literacy in responding to sustainable development challenges such as health, social equality, economic empowerment and environmental sustainability. Most literacy programmes set out to combine at least two of the three dimensions of sustainable development – social equality, economic empowerment and environmental sustainability – and many of them target women, as in the case of the Functional Literacy Programme for Women in Morocco, or vulnerable youth, as with Basic Literacy and Vocational Training for Young Adults in Haiti, or the National Programme for Education and Work in Uruguay. While a few programmes address the needs of urban population groups, such as adolescents living and working in Cairo's Garbage City, for example, most of them are community-based and serve rural populations. The Rural Literacy programme for adults in Slovenia is one example. Some programmes, such as Teaching the Nomads in the Wild in the hill state of Uttarakhand in India, are even reaching out to nomadic and isolated minorities by using 'mobile teachers'.

A number of programmes combine all three dimensions of sustainable development, including environmental sustainability. This is the case, for example, in the Functional Literacy Programme of Women of the Argan Cooperative. The programme is run by the Moroccan non-governmental organization (NGO), Association Ibn Albaytar, which aims to promote and demonstrate a balanced relationship between people and nature. The Argan tree serves as a buffer against the Sahara desert, but is also a source of oil used in cooking, the cosmetics industry and traditional medicine. The literacy programme is delivered in Amazigh, a Berber language, and combines teaching practical skills to do with managing cooperatives

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with awareness-raising about the importance of preserving the Argan forest and information about new family laws.

While many literacy programmes have incorporated an environmental topic into their curriculum, a few have made environmental sustainability their core concern. An example is the environmental literacy work of the Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust (NaDEET), which has set up an environmental education centre on the NamibRand Nature Reserve in Namibia's southern Hardap region to work with children and adults in local communities. Participants are offered hands-on experiential learning and have the opportunity to reflect on their real-life experiences in relation to climate change. The Indonesian Programme, Promoting Innovative Literacy Education in Coping with Natural Disasters, has a special thematic focus on enhancing resilience against natural disasters. The programme helps communities to prepare for natural disasters and assists families in the recovery process after they have occurred.

The vast majority of the literacy programmes featured here take a functional and community-based approach, linking literacy learning with income-generating activities and practical skills training. The Adult Literacy and Skills Training Programme (ALSTP) in South Africa, for example, takes an integrated approach to literacy skills training and community development. Mother-tongue literacy, English as a second language, numeracy and theme-based training on livelihood development (income generation, food production and preservation) are provided, as well as health education, civic education and sustainable environmental conservation. A similar approach is taken by the Literacy and Community Development Programme of Pamoja in Ghana, an inclusive literacy and socio-economic development programme integrating literacy with livelihood skills training, health, and civic and environmental education. In many cases, these programmes aim to support participants in organizing themselves into community-based self-help groups and committees to receive financial and technical

support from the government for local development. This is the case, for example, in the Integral Functional Adult Education (IFAE) Programme in Siliti, Ethiopia.

The Nepalese Community Learning Centres Programme is a typical example of a community-based education programme which offers opportunities geared towards rural development in the Asian region. In addition to literacy, it provides livelihood skills training and support to establish income-generating projects, and promote health and civic education, and knowledge of environmental management and conservation. Other examples of community-based programmes that integrate literacy with sustainable development – though with an emphasis on income-generation – include the Ganokendra (Community Learning Centres) programme in Bangladesh, the Community Learning Centre Programme in Gansu, China, the Vocational Village Programme in Indonesia, the Community-based Adult Learning and Development Programme (CALDP) in the Philippines, the Community Learning Centres in Uzbekistan, and the Community Learning Centre Programme in Vietnam, which has a strong focus on ethnic minorities.

The goal of Peru's Youth and Adult Literacy and Basic Education Programme (PAEBA) is to combat illiteracy, poverty and under-development among socially marginalized Peruvian communities, using an approach that combines literacy and numeracy learning with vocational skills training. The primary aim of the Chilean government's Chilecalifica Programme is to enhance Chile's social and economic development by improving employability and promoting active citizenship, thus facilitating the involvement of individuals in all aspects of economic and social life. Its objective is to enhance opportunities for lifelong education and training, especially for young people and adults living in poverty, and to improve access to vocational and professional education and the quality of provision. The Non-formal Education and Livelihood Skills Training Programme (NFELSTP) in Uganda equips vulnerable young people from marginalized (urban

and rural) communities with entrepreneurial and related literacy and life skills and helps them to establish viable income-generating projects.

Offering children and young people working in particularly hazardous conditions alternative, safe work environments is the main goal of the Learning and Earning in Cairo Garbage City Programme, implemented by the Egyptian NGO Spirit of Youth Association (SOY). The programme has a strong environmental component as it helps members of the garbage collecting communities living on the outskirts of Cairo to improve the environment by spreading the concept and practice of waste segregation the source among local neighbourhoods of Greater Cairo. The Community-Based Forestry Management Programme in the Gambia is another that combines economic and environmental dimensions by supporting the empowerment of local communities to become effective and environmentally conscious entrepreneurs making sustainable use of natural resources. This integrated life skills and ecological management training programme is based on the Gambian community forest concept which aims to enable the rural population to own and actively participate in the management and exploitation of community forests.

The social dimension, and, in particular, the empowerment of marginalized communities, is at the heart of programmes run by NGOs such as the Angolan Association for Adult Education's Participatory Liberating Literacy Instrumented by Active Communities (APLICA) Programme. The primary aim of this programme is to fight poverty and social injustice and to reduce inequalities in gender and educational access by providing non-formal education and empowering learners to produce sustainable changes in their communities. The programmes supported by the Associates in Research and Education for Development (ARED) in Senegal focus on developing basic literacy skills, leadership and organizational capacities and on providing information on citizenship and civil society so that people can make informed choices and pursue their own goals through increased access to education and information.

Few programmes combine literacy learning with health issues. Two examples are the Supporting Maternal and Child Health Improvement and Building Literate Environment (SMILE) programme in Cambodia, a model integrating literacy and maternal and child health education as well as strengthening literate environments at home and in communities, and Brazil's Alfabetizando com Saúde (Learning to Read and Write in Good Health) programme. The latter has been implemented by the Curitiba City Council in Brazil, which provides adult literacy programmes that simultaneously promote health awareness, help prevent outbreaks of disease, increase environmental awareness and promote healthy life styles.

All the programmes featured in this publication provide encouraging examples of the role adult literacy and education can play in enabling sustainable development. They also point to an urgent need for future policy development on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals to incorporate adult literacy and learning, promoting a transformative and holistic approach to the empowerment of disadvantaged individuals, families and communities. The implementation of the post-2015 development agenda – in particular, the education-related targets – requires the mobilization of sufficient resources for adult literacy and education to make sustainable development a reality for millions of people who have, until now, missed out.

More examples of innovative literacy programmes can be found on UNESCO's Effective Literacy and Numeracy Practices database (LitBase), which is a continuously developing database of promising adult literacy and learning programmes (<http://www.unesco.org/UIL/litbase/>). UNESCO warmly invites providers of innovative programmes not yet featured in LitBase to contribute material about their literacy initiatives. Please visit the LitBase website for further details.

Ulrike Hanemann

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## ANGOLA

# APLICA Participatory Liberating Literacy Instrumented by Active Communities

### Implementing Organization

Angolan Association for Adult Education (Associação Angolana para Educação de Adultos)

### Language of Instruction

Portuguese

### Funding

Ministry of Education, DVV International, ICCO, IBIS

### Date of Inception

2000

## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

After facing a 27-year civil war (1975–2002) that caused 1.5 million deaths, improving education in Angola is among one of the great challenges the country strives to overcome. The Angolan life expectancy at birth is no more than 48 years. This is reflected in the high percentage (43.2% of the population) of youth citizens aged 14 years or younger. Approximately 70% of the people live in poverty and 54% live in extreme poverty. Although at 2% the rate of HIV/AIDS prevalence is lower than the average of the sub-Saharan countries (5.5%; 2009), it is estimated that the number of individuals living with HIV equals 180,000, out of which 60% are women. Gender inequality represents another major issue in this nation, especially with regard to access to education. It is estimated that out of the 800,000 school-age children who are out of school, 433,600 are girls (1998). Furthermore, the ratio of female to male gross enrolment rates in primary education is 81%, and the differences between males and females in the rates of youth and adult literacy equal to 16% and 26%.

Illiteracy rates in Angola remain very high and constitute one of the greatest societal challenges which need to be addressed. The Literacy and Schooling Acceleration Programme (Programa de Alfabetização e Aceleração Escolar, PAAE) developed by the federal government is an example of how the public sector is responding to this obstacle. The PAAE was designed as part of a 14-year strategic plan to meet the millennium development goals concerning education and literacy. It is a national literacy campaign that, according to the country's preparatory national report (2008) for CONFINTEA VI, has had an average annual rate of literacy growth that corresponds to 9.02%, and a total addition of 180,000 new literates in between the years of 2002 and 2008. However, since national expenditure in education is still very low, 2.6% of GDP, and has remained unchanged for the past ten years, it is clear that education is not a current priority on the government's agenda for public investments. As a result, in order to improve national literacy rates, the engagement of civic society, such as the Angolan Association for Adult Education (Associação Angolana para Educação de Adultos, AAEA), has become extremely necessary.

The AAEA was established in 1998 with the mission of increasing educational provision through innovative and inexpensive non-formal services for adult learning in order to fight against poverty and exclusion, especially among the underserved communities. It also endeavours to put an end on the "culture of silence", the alienation and the lack of voice and self-governance of oppressed and impoverished persons in the developing world in the face of authorities, leaders and members of the elite. This national organisation has contributed to the expansion

and consolidation of the practices of the Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT) approach, a participatory methodology developed in the 1990s, which has been used worldwide by over 500 organisations. This approach has been denominated in Angola as the APLICA Participatory Liberating Literacy Instrumented by Active Communities (Alfabetização Participativa Libertadora Instrumentada por Comunidades).

## THE PROGRAMME APLICA

APLICA, initiated in the year 2000, is not only a methodology for promoting literacy skills and adult learning as an end in itself, but also aims to promote social changes by empowering learners with the newly-acquired abilities as well as through group discussions and team collaboration. Other innovative characteristics of this programme include using tailor-made materials, employing participatory techniques, developing a forum for sharing ideas and experiences among participants, and promoting learning and knowledge about human rights. Furthermore, the curriculum includes cross-cutting issues that are highly relevant to the social context where the programme is embedded, such as HIV/AIDS and gender. Finally, the programme offers a high degree of flexibility in terms of methodology, schedule, duration and location of so-called learning circles, which vary across communities in order to address personal, working and educational challenges of its participants.

## Aims and Objectives

The primary aim of this programme is to fight poverty and social injustice and to diminish inequalities in gender

and education access by providing non-formal education and empowering learners to produce sustainable changes in their communities. The programme also endeavours to:

- promote the acquisition and usage of skills in written language, i.e. reading, writing and calculating, in order to respond to the learners' personal and working needs;
- integrate cross-cutting topics, such as HIV/AIDS, with literacy in order to enhance social inclusion of the most disadvantaged groups by empowering them to fight for improved living conditions;
- terminate the "culture of silence" that still predominates among the underserved communities, particularly among women;
- teach learners to work collaboratively with other members of the community in order to promote sustainable social and economic changes where they live;
- mobilise, promote awareness and encourage other civil society stakeholders to increase participation and provision of services in adult education;
- disseminate APLICA/REFLECT as an adult education approach in Angola.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Recruitment and Training of Facilitators

The minimum requirement to become a facilitator is to have completed at least grade four at elementary school, which implies that he or she must have a well-established repertoire of the basic abilities in written language. They also need to be respected within the community where they reside and intend to work, and be aware that the learning experience goes beyond the learners in that it also includes the facilitators themselves in a constant exchange process of self-development and the acquisition of new abilities and knowledge. Because of the long-lasting history of low schooling among females, their lack of time and the heavy burden of domestic duties that most often lies on this group, the majority of facilitators are males. The facilitators' recruitment process starts



when the organisation reaches out to a community and disseminates its work to leaders, such as clergymen, secretaries and programme coordinators. Then these leaders present the association with a list of names of potential candidates who are selected by AAEA staff. The expected roles of facilitators include leading the circles, participating in monthly meetings with other facilitators from the municipality, writing monthly reports about their work and challenges and electing the vice-coordinator and coordinator of the region. The number of facilitators varies according to the population density and the demands of each community, and can be as low as ten or reach up to 30 facilitators per municipality. For the last two years, there has been an average of 245 facilitators and the ratio of facilitator per number of learners equals about 1/20.

Facilitators are required to participate in a five-day pre-service training which includes group discussions about illiteracy, an introduction to the APLICA approach, an overall view of the pedagogical and social theories developed by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, an exercise to identify the differences between child and adult learning, and a guide that

contains the tasks activities. The two-day revision workshops, held twice a year, are an additional resource, intended to revise earlier contents, to enhance facilitators' knowledge and teaching practices and to present new tools to be used in the circles. In addition, AAEA offers workshops on cross-cutting issues which help facilitators to expand their knowledge and understanding about topics that are relevant to themselves and their community. For instance, the training about HIV/AIDS aims to increase awareness and produce discussions among facilitators and coordinators about essential facts, such as sexual behaviours and transmission. Facilitators receive a monthly stipend of USD 50 for working part-time in the circles. Some facilitators receive additional resources (USD 100) from the government which cannot yet be guaranteed to all participants.

### Enrolment of Learners

The work of AAEA was designed to target mainly youths and adults. Because of the gender inequalities with regard to access to formal education, which was particularly predominant during the civil war (1975-2002), the country has a



greater number of male adults with higher levels of schooling who do not need classes aimed at promoting basic competencies, as opposed to the female counterparts. Thus, as a result, the vast majority of the participants (70–80%) of the APLICA circles are women. In addition, even though out-of-school children are not among the target groups for this programme, they can participate, especially those who live in more distant rural areas which often have no schools or limited capacity to provide educational services to all young learners. Also, within the last few years, there has been a greater participation of adolescents. Considering that Angola is a very young country in terms of its demographic characteristics, the average age of participants varies from 21–35 years.

The country is organised into 18 provinces, 164 municipalities and 535 communes. The coverage of the programme reaches only nine municipalities of three provinces (Luanda, Bengo and Kwanza Sul), but has enrolled over 36,000 participants since its inception in 2000. The average annual intake of new participants is 4,000, but in 2011 there are 7,000 learners enrolled in the circles. Approximately 42%

of the country's population still live in rural areas, and considering the extensive rainy seasons in addition to the lack of efficient transportation systems and the absence of paved roads in many areas, geographical location constitutes an important issue to be addressed by AAEA. Furthermore, a survey conducted in the country revealed that 84% of the respondents from rural areas had never passed grade four, whereas in urban areas 53% had moved on into higher grades. In order to tackle this challenge, the circles are mostly available in rural areas and the cities' outskirts.

The desire to learn how to read and write and expand general knowledge, the opportunity to improve employability and enhance management skills as well as the ability to communicate in Portuguese are just a few examples out of the many factors which have motivated Angolans to join the APLICA circles. The minimum requirement to enrol is the individual recognition of the need and importance of learning as a result of a personal decision. Students are recruited by local community leaders from religious and public institutions who are responsible for identifying prospective learners and requesting

from AAEA an implementation of one or more APLICA circles.

### Teaching/Learning Approaches and Methodologies

As previously stated, the Angolan Association employs the APLICA approach, an adaptation of the methodology known as the Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT). REFLECT/APLICA proposes the integration of teaching literacy with empowering learners with knowledge and competencies in order to give them self-assurance and the necessary abilities to promote social, political and economic development within their community. This approach uses the participatory rural appraisal techniques, created and disseminated by Action Aid and based on the teachings of Paulo Freire, which aim to enable local populations to analyse their own reality in order to produce sustainable changes in their surroundings.

Facilitators and participants meet in the learning circles about three to four times a week for two hours, usually before or after work. The term



circle is used in order to represent the type of activities and the structural arrangements that take place in the learning meetings. Learners are not expected to sit in desks and passively listen to the facilitators' instructions and lectures as in a school-like format. Rather, learners place themselves in a semi-circle and the activities start with the creation of a graphic on the floor, such as a map, matrix, calendar or diagram, using various materials that include pieces of cardboards pictures, rocks, cans, construction papers and others. Facilitators guide all the learners to discuss a specific topic, usually relevant to their daily lives which then results in the final display. The next step requires them to place the graphic on the wall, choose a word related to the discussion – the so-called generating word – learn how to read and write it and rearrange the syllables of the generating word to acquire new words. Finally, learners engage in a process of discussing and planning concrete actions based upon their previous dialogues. Actions may include a cleanliness campaign around the community, meeting community and political leaders in order to advocate for improved living conditions or for matters that are important to them, visiting peers who have not attended classes, etc. In more advanced levels, participants are also required to produce a text about their discussions and include the newly-acquired words.

Facilitators are given a copy of the so-called Mother-Manual, a guide that contains ten units with various topics and all the steps to be carried out in the circles. It includes guidance to discussing themes, ideas for generat-

ing words, and reading, writing and numeracy activities. Examples of units include a matrix of health in which the objective is to discuss participants' opinion about different kinds of treatment for diseases; a community map to promote a discussion of the history of the village to expand the participants' knowledge about their own background; and an agricultural calendar which gives them the opportunity to discuss their working plan and one-year timetable enabling them to learn from each other and improve their own practices. All these units include the four-step approach – designing the graphic, choosing the generating word, learning to read and write and taking action. The amount of time necessary to finish all the units varies across groups, but it usually takes between eight to ten months.

The language of instruction and of the materials is Portuguese, though not all Angolans speak the official language as their mother tongue, especially in rural areas where the programme is highly concentrated. Because Portuguese is spoken by the vast majority at least as a second language and in some circles the dialogue is carried out in the participants' mother tongue, communication is not an acute challenge for the success of this programme. Also, in many areas circles meet in various locations, such as schools, facilitators' houses and churches, and are completely free of charge. Learning is evaluated through a participative assessment which engages participants, facilitators and technicians in order to identify behaviour changes in the personal lives of both learners and instructors. Students who wish

to have their newly-acquired literacy skills certified, have the option of participating in a formal assessment offered by the Ministry of Education.

### Funding Support

The programme's annual costs are US\$180,000, whereas the cost per learner varies between US\$70 and USD 100 according to the location of the circles. Though the government provides some limited funding, including the stipends being paid to a number of facilitators, the great majority of resources come from a combination of three different sources. DVV International, a non-profit German organisation aimed at supporting and strengthening adult education programmes around the world, contributes roughly 35%, which is used to cover part of the salaries of the AAEA staff and the everyday running costs of the two offices. ICCO also provides about 35% towards remaining expenses that not covered by public funding. This is a Dutch inter-church organisation that distributes global financial and technical support to local organisations in order to promote sustainable economic development and democracy in the developing countries. The final 30% of the costs are provided by IBIS, a Danish organisation focused on creating equal access to education, especially among poor and marginalised Africans and Latin Americans.

### MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The monitoring and evaluation system of the AAEA is currently under restructure to improve its practices and provide well-established participatory monitoring. The main objective is to guarantee quality assurance of services by tracking the results of the activities and using the information to reformulate actions, tools and trainings. In 2010, the association started carrying out workshops to train facilitators and coordinators to monitor the circles in their municipalities. They used the framework Counting Seeds for Change, a practical guide to help practitioners (i.e. facilitators, trainers and coordinators) to assess the strengths, weaknesses and challenges of the REFLECT programmes in an effective and coherent manner worldwide, including Angola. Prior to the establishment of this new approach, part of the monitoring was carried out in regular meetings, which are still effective despite the additional workshops implemented last year. These gatherings brought together participants, facilitators, local public authorities, religious leaders and staff from the Ministry of Education and AAEA to discuss, analyse and the track progress of the circles, as well as to identify flaws, gaps, provide ideas for further improvements and assess the benefits for the persons involved.

Some of the indicators examined in monitoring the programme are the number of participants in the circles, learners and facilitators' attendance, duration of implementation of circles, number of days the circles meet and their timetables, characteristics of participants and facilitators, assessments of reading, writing and numeracy skills and behaviour changes. The data collection system employs a bottom-up format, in which the facilitators report to the coordinator of their municipality who reports to the regional supervisor. The supervisor sends the information to the provincial coordinator who gathers information from all the different localities and reports to the national coordinator. In addition, observations of the circles are carried out by the coordinators of each municipality who are also a facilitator

of their own circle and by the staff of the funding organisations.

So far, one external evaluation has been carried out in order to assess the effectiveness of the methodological approach employed by AAEA. In 2008, DVV International evaluated the extent to which APLICA has successfully achieved its goals in teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills, and has improved the quality of life of learners and facilitators. Data were collected through questionnaires, individual and group interviews, document analyses, participative observations and literacy and numeracy assessments. The main result from this evaluation revealed that learners had successfully acquired basic reading, writing and numeracy skills as a result of their participation to the APLICA circles. The majority of the sample was able to perform as high as level four (out of five) of the literacy test, meaning they were able to read, comprehend and answer questions about a simple text, and level three in numeracy, i.e. they were able to perform basic arithmetic operations. Additional results showed that:

- there has been a constant increase in the number of APLICA circles;
- learners and facilitators have displayed behaviour changes, such as greater awareness of the need for hygiene and improved sanitation, improved knowledge about nutritional values of different crops, and a higher degree of democracy in the decision-making processes within families and communities;
- cross-cutting issues, such as HIV/AIDS, have been systematically included in facilitators' trainings and circles; and
- AAEA has consistently advocated for the use of the APLICA approach with partner organisations.

Reports from AAEA also present the many benefits that the circles have produced among learners and facilitators. First of all, a great improvement in the infrastructure of some communities has been observed. Due to the action plans designed during the sessions of the circles, learners have achieved many changes in their surroundings, such as building latrines and meeting halls, cleaning streets and houses, improving the hygiene

habits of community members, including non-APLICA-learners, and improving access to drinking water. An impact on the relationships among community members in terms of solidarity, better communication and social integration has also been reported. For instance, there are learners who have voluntarily offered to take care of domestic chores for peers who are unable to perform these tasks, in addition to several reports of individuals who have demonstrated a greater ability to deal with conflicts within families and communities. Other benefits include diminishing and/or eliminating the "culture of silence" in some communities, especially among females. For example, as a result of increased knowledge about human rights, some women from a specific circle carried out a protest in their community to raise their voices against the domestic violence they experienced. Furthermore, APLICA has produced results that go beyond the expected outcomes, since it has benefited the learners not only in their capacity as citizens and community members, but also as parents. Participation in the programme has resulted in greater awareness with regard to the importance of education, and as a consequence it has produced increased children's school attendance rates and greater parental support in homework and academic activities.

### CHALLENGES

The primary challenge in the implementation of the APLICA circles in Angola, according to AAEA, has been to raise public awareness about the importance of literacy and education for the promotion of human development. There is still a lack of understanding about the interconnection between human rights and education, including literacy, which results in the low financial investments that the federal government has provided to formal and non-formal adult education programmes in Angola. Another major challenge is that donors have not yet fully realised that adult education activities should not only target the development of literacy and numeracy skills, but they should also promote the development of broader competencies, such as life skills and the empowerment of

participants through increasing their awareness about diseases, gender issues, democratic participation and human rights. In this sense, AAEA has advocated for the Education For All goals, and for the implementation of comprehensive non-formal adult education programmes in the country.

Additional challenges are:

- limited means of transportation and infrastructure for systematic distribution of learning materials;
- low stipends for facilitators and coordinators which have resulted in a decrease of the number of facilitators at the same time that the number of participants has grown;
- lack of materials for the development of activities during the circles' sessions;
- lack of opportunities for facilitators to improve their own educational level;
- high drop-out and absence rates that are a consequence of external and internal factors such as health problems, lack of time and lack of personal motivation to attend circles in a regular basis; and
- a weak monitoring system as a result of major difficulties to provide regular visits to all locations, especially during rainy seasons or in the areas where there are no paved roads.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The following key lessons have emerged during the 11-year implementation experience of REFLECT/APLICA in the Angolan context:

- adults acquire literacy and numeracy skills more easily and in a shorter period of time when the teaching approach is context-based and when the contents and lessons respond to their daily needs;
- the circles and the participatory approach enable not only the development of learners, but also an exchange between participants and facilitators which further contributes to the learning and holistic growth of the facilitators;
- the promotion of self-esteem among learners is essential to the process of eliminating the "culture of silence" as well as to stimulating dialogue and free expression of ideas;

- it remains a challenge to secure sustainable financial resources toward adult literacy because donors still have a limited understanding about the importance of giving educational opportunities to youths, adults and elders instead of focusing exclusively on children. The promotion of adult education is essential not only to empower older individuals to make changes in their communities, fight poverty and increase employability, but also to give them the necessary tools which they need to help and support their own children's education;
- providing literacy training is still perceived as being an act of charity to the poor, rather than understanding that having access to it is actually part of the basic human rights.

## SUSTAINABILITY

One great challenge AAEA has faced since the inception of the APLICA circles is the lack of long-term funding partnerships and strategies to secure sustainable investments. Despite the need for constant renegotiation with donors, the association has been able to successfully maintain over time partnerships with three different organisations, DVV International, ICCO and IBIS, which have provided the bulk of the necessary funding. Due to the existing high rates of adult illiteracy combined with the lack of governmental actions to address this problem, the need for initiatives such as the one offered by AAEA is pressing, a fact that has contributed to the sustainability and expansion of the APLICA circles throughout Angola. At the very beginning of the programme, the circles were implemented in only two municipalities of two provinces. To date the circles have reached three provinces with direct implementation of AAEA, and one additional province through the work of another civil society organisation. The APLICA circles constitute one of the few projects in the country that provides literacy classes in distant rural communities.

Other factors which have strengthened the work of AAEA include its positive acceptance and the active participation of learners and community members in promoting the circles in their surroundings; the project

model's enabling of communities to develop a sense of ownership of the circles, since learners and facilitators are in charge of requesting, executing, monitoring and assessing the activities; and finally the establishment of partnerships with other initiatives which have promoted the work in the field of adult education, such as Promoting Female Literacy in Angola and Mozambique (Projecto de Alfabetização Feminina em Angola e Moçambique, FELITAMO).

## CONTACT

Vítor Manuel Barbosa  
Presidente da Direcção  
Associação Angolana para Educação de Adultos  
barbosa@netangola.com

Fátima Ramos Sebastião  
Directora para Administração e Finanças  
fatimaramossebastiao@gmail.com

## ETHIOPIA

# Integrated Functional Adult Education

### Implementing organization

Siliti Zone Education Department

### Languages of instruction

Amharic, Siltegna (local language)

### Date of inception

2010

### Programme partners

Addis Development Vision (a local NGO), Action Aid Ethiopia, Azernet Berbera Programme, and the following Siliti Zone government agencies: agriculture, health, trade and industry, women and youth affairs, and the agricultural products exchange and cooperatives department

### Funding: Government, private sector, a national NGO, and target communities (which currently cover a third of the costs)

### Annual programme costs

Approximately 3,661,000 Birr (or USD 180,000)

### Annual programme cost per learner

Approximately 40 Birr (or USD 2)

## COUNTRY CONTEXT

According to the World Bank (2014), the main challenges facing Ethiopia include the alleviation of poverty among its citizens and its further progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). To address these issues, the Ethiopian government introduced a five-year development plan in 2010 called the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP). The main goal of the GTP is to transform Ethiopia into a middle-income economy. To achieve this, the Ethiopian government is allocating a significant share of its budget to poverty alleviation. In recent years, these efforts have led to improvements in the standard of living of Ethiopians.

For example, the number of people below the national poverty line of USD 0.60 per day decreased from 38.7% in 2005 to 29.6% in 2010. In 2015, Ethiopia aims to reduce the number of people in extreme poverty to 22.2%. The country has reached the MDG for child mortality and is on track to achieve the goals on gender parity in education, HIV/AIDS, and malaria.

Despite this progress, Ethiopia continues to face major challenges, such as improving access to primary education and addressing food insecurity. Currently, primary education is short of the MDG for universal primary education, with 85% coverage. The Integrated Functional Adult Education programme implemented in the Siliti Zone addresses all of these challenges and, therefore, fits well into Ethiopia's overall development efforts (World Bank, 2012).

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The Integrated Functional Adult Education (IFAE) programme is a functional literacy programme that reaches out to adults and young people aged 15 or older and is available to women, the disabled, and minority groups. The main goals of the programme are to increase literacy rates, to promote women's empowerment, to improve participants' health and to raise the general standards of living within communities. The programme consists of two eight-month courses that participants complete within two years. Topics taught include literacy, gender issues, environmental protection, civic and ethical education, health, disease prevention, family planning, and agriculture.

To date, the IFAE programme has been implemented only in the Siliti Zone. It has reached approximately 165,000 adults and young people,

including 76,500 women, since its launch in 2010.

## Aims and Objectives

The main objective of the programme is to increase the adult literacy rate in Ethiopia's Siliti Zone to 95% by 2015. Besides improving literacy, the programme also aims to teach participants fundamental skills and knowledge that will increase the standard of living in communities. For example:

- Gaining an understanding of their (national and international) rights and obligations;
- Promoting productivity and creativity;
- Teaching life skills such as family planning, agriculture and disease prevention;
- Teaching how to obtain and use information;
- Establishing a culture of family learning; and
- Teaching participants problem-solving skills that allow them to address and confront daily challenges and local social, economic and political problems.

The programme hopes to reach around 317,000 individuals within the first five years, of which 65% should be women and young people.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

The IFAE programme is implemented in eight Woredas (the third-level administrative division in Ethiopia) and one city administration (Silti, Lanfuro, Dalocha, Hulbarege, Sankura, Merab-Azernete Berbera, Mesrak-Azernete Berbera, Alcho-Wuriro, and Werabe Town) in the Siliti Zone. Specifically, the programme runs in 181 rural Kebeles (the smallest administrative unit in Ethiopia,

comparable to a neighbourhood) and 71 urban Kebeles.

The programme takes two years to complete and consists of two courses, each of eight months' duration. Teaching takes place for two hours a day, three days a week, or, alternatively, three hours a day for two days a week. Facilitators usually conduct classes in schools, alternative basic education centres and other Kebele facilities. The programme's partners, Addis Development Vision and Action Aid Azerenet-Berebera, assist facilitators in raising awareness of the programme.

### Teaching and Learning: Approaches and Methodologies

The teaching methodology used is active and participatory. Facilitators often link literacy training to everyday topics. For example, when facilitators teach about Malaria, they educate participants about the symptoms, transmission, treatment and prevention of Malaria, while also telling learners how to spell words and phrases related to the disease.

### Programme Content and Teaching Material

The learners' needs are determined through face-to-face interviews conducted by regional facilitators. The curriculum is then developed to reflect the interests of the learners and the needs of the community in question. The needs assessment of learners happens at the Kebele level. However, the Ministry of Education dictates that the learning content in all Kebeles should cover its core curriculum.

Facilitators generally base the content on the interests of the participants, which often means combining numeracy and literacy training with income-generating and livelihood topics. The main subjects covered in the programme include literacy, gender, environmental protection, civic and ethical education, health, disease prevention, family planning, and agriculture. Overall, facilitators use around 20,000 textbooks and manuals. Local officers are respon-

sible for translating and adjusting the teaching material in order to tailor them to local circumstances. In addition, programme facilitators use other equipment, such as agricultural tools and cleaning utensils, to conduct teaching.

### Facilitators

Paid teachers, volunteers and university students conduct the classes. There are around 50 participants for every teacher. Most facilitators come from the local communities. They are required to know the local language and to be familiar with the traditions and culture of the locality. Facilitators receive training in the form of workshops and seminars at regional, Woreda and Kebele levels. Training for facilitators includes sessions on andragogy, adult psychology, learning assessments, and classroom management. Addis Development Vision and Action Aid Azerenet-Berebera also help to recruit and train facilitators. Teachers receive an average monthly salary of 600 Birr (approximately USD 30)

### MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The monitoring and evaluation of the programme is carried out by Woreda education officers who regularly collect data to monitor the progress of the programme. Each officer covers six education centres and conducts a review of the programme on a quarterly basis. In addition, programme implementers distribute an annual census questionnaire on the development of the skills training programme to each Woreda.

### Accreditation Mechanisms

The local authority issues certificates to participants who complete the first year and to those who graduate after two years on the programme.

## IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

### Impact and Achievements

The IFAE programme has a positive impact on the standard of living, education, income, health and social status of participants. Women experience empowerment as a result of participating in the programme. For example, some female participants have formed women's groups that offer support when one member of the group becomes sick or faces other hardships. Women also become more aware of their rights, which enables them to improve their access to land, electricity and water. The social status of women also increases as they start to gain decision-making power within the family. In 2013, women made up close to 50% of programme graduates (10,083 graduates out of 24,382).

Participants increase their literacy and numeracy abilities. Children also indirectly benefit from the programme as better-educated parents tend to provide better support to their children, by encouraging them to study and by providing them with educational materials. In participating communities, school drop-out rates decreased from 7.9% in 2012 to 1.5% in 2014.

There are also positive health outcomes associated with the IFAE programme. Parents tend to vaccinate their children more frequently and mothers are more likely to understand the dangers of pregnancy, to receive pre- and post-natal health care and to engage in family planning. In addition, the personal hygiene of participants also improves. For example, after participating in this programme, some participants and their families began to construct and utilize latrines.

The programme also has a positive influence on the income and nutrition of participants' households. Participants start to use fertilizers and apply new agricultural practices to improve crop yield. Households diversify their agricultural activities to reduce malnutrition. The programme's training in technical and business development skills contributes to rising incomes. Learners also

start to save more as they become more familiar with the concept of saving.

## Challenges

Challenges facing the programme include:

- High staff turnover due to small salaries;
- Lack of trained personnel;
- Lack of collaboration among facilitators and partners;
- Additional costs for contractors writing textbooks and manuals;
- In some Woredas, there is less support for the empowerment of women due to cultural prejudice;
- Participant drop-out rates due to child-raising duties, especially when children go to school and they have to take care of all domestic activities; and
- Not every learner receives his or her own textbook and facilitators have to share manuals.

## LESSONS LEARNED

In the beginning in 2010, the programme ran one learning centre per Kebele. Over time, the number of learning centres per Kebele increased to six training centres. In the process, facilitators received more training and additional staff joined the programme, including mentors and supervisors. The government adjusted its financial contributions, and the programme facilitators changed the structure of the programme to clusters consisting of between three and five Kebeles. The purpose of these clusters is to share financial, labour and material resources among learning centres and facilitators within the cluster. Most importantly, programme implementers also tried to extend the practices from the best-performing learning centres (in terms of access, quality and participation) to other learning centres.

Looking back, programme facilitators feel that the programme should have been scaled up in order to reach more poor and vulnerable people. In the future, it will be a focus for government agencies to scale up the programme.

## SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability of the programme is achieved through an arrangement that organizes participants into different community-level groups and committees. For example, women organize themselves into women's groups. In addition, participants form technical, education, training and supervision committees. These groups receive financial and technical support from the government. Through their membership in these groups, participants gain a responsible role and gain a sense of ownership over the programme. The community-based groups promote adult education and contribute material, financial and staff resources to building new learning centres and improving existing ones.

The community-based groups also enable participants to access individual loans and improve social cohesion within a community. Therefore, they play an important role in poverty reduction, which further promotes the sustainability of the programme's positive outcomes. In addition, the improved social status of women, promoted by the women's groups, is especially important in maintaining the positive benefits of the programme. Regional education bureaus further promote the sustainability of the programme by providing political support for further functional literacy education.

## CONTACT

Zeyne Bilka Mohammed  
Zonal Education Department Head  
Siliti Zone, Worabe Town, Ethiopia  
Telephone/Fax: +251467710499  
Email: zeyne.bilka@yahoo.com

## GAMBIA

# Community-Based Forestry Management Programme

### Implementing Organization

The government of the Gambia (through the Forestry Department) in partnership with local NGOs such as the National Consultancy on Forestry Extension Services and Training (NACO), Fight Against Social and Economic Exclusion (FASE), the National Beekeepers' Association of the Gambia (NBAG) and the Jamorai Timber and Firewood Federation (JATIFF)

### Language of Instruction

English and African languages (e.g. Mandinka, Bambara, Wolof, Pulaar, Soninké and Jola)

### Funding

The government of the Gambia; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the government of Germany through the Gambian-German Forestry Project (GGFP)

### Date of Inception

2001

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The Republic of the Gambia is one of the least developed and poorest countries in Africa, with an economy that is heavily dependent on agriculture and the processing of agricultural products. The agricultural sector accounts for about 30 % of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employs over 70 % of the total labour force. The heavy dependence on agriculture has impeded the country's development and thus the state's capacity to provide its people with basic amenities including access to alternative livelihood and educational opportunities. As a result, about 58 % of the population live in absolute poverty (i.e. on less than US\$1 per day) and about 36% and 55% of the

youth and adult population, respectively, are illiterate. In addition, heavy dependence on subsistence farming has also led to massive deforestation and environmental degradation, an aspect which has increased poverty levels in rural areas where about 63 % of the country's population reside. Current estimates suggest that 43 % of the total land area in the Gambia is still covered by forests, 78 % of which are severely degraded.

In order to address this situation, the Gambian government, with support from FAO and the German government through the Gambian-German Forestry Project (GGFP) and various local NGOs, has been spearheading the establishment of community forests and community-based forestry projects since the early 1990s. To this end, the government adapted the Community Forestry Concept (developed by FAO, see below) and introduced the Gambian Forest Management Concept (GFMC) through the Gambian Forestry Act (1995). In addition, the state also established the National Forest Fund (NFF, 1996) and the National Forestry Action Plan (NFAP, the latest being for the 2001–2010 period). The principal aim of these policy instruments was to promote development, social empowerment (poverty alleviation) and environmental conservation through participatory or community-based management and exploitation or utilisation of forests and forest resources. It is on the basis of this enabling policy environment that the Gambian government instituted the Community-Based Forestry Management Programme (CBFMP) in 2001.

## THE COMMUNITY-BASED FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (CBFMP)

The CBFMP is an integrated life skills and ecological (environmental) management training programme which, as noted above, is based on the GFMC or the Community Forest Concept (CFC).

### Aims and Objectives

The CFC and thus the CBFMP is basically a participatory forest management approach the basic aim of which is to transfer forest ownership and user rights from the state to local communities in order to:

- promote literacy development and lifelong learning;
- stimulate collective attitudinal changes towards natural resources in order to promote sustainable environmental conservation;
- assist rural households to achieve sustainable livelihoods (i.e. to increase their income-earning capacity) through skills training in sustainable and community-centred management and utilisation of forestry resources and products;
- promote rural development; social transformation and empowerment by enabling the rural population to own and actively participate in the management and exploitation of community forests, and
- assist rural communities in adapting traditional land use systems according to the recent development of both human and natural resources; and finally
- empower local communities to become effective and environmentally conscious natural resource-based entrepreneurs.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

The GFMC endeavours to promote rural or community development and social empowerment by directly linking forest management and conservation activities to basic life skills training and income-generating opportunities. To this end, the CBFMP is implemented through a holistic and integrated approach which provides participants with training in:

- literacy (basic and functional literacy; continuing education);
- livelihood skills training and support to establish income generation activities / projects (in, for example, handicraft production; beekeeping; cash crop production; sustainable firewood harvesting and timber production);
- civic and health education; and
- environmental management / conservation.

The CBFMP is currently being implemented in three divisions / regions of the country: Western Division, Central River Division and Lower River Division. Currently, over 500 villages or communities are participating in the programme, managing more than 300 Community Forests covering over 24 000 hectares of Gambian forest.

## Capacity Building: Recruitment and Training of Facilitators / Trainers

In order to ensure the effective and sustainable implementation of the CBFMP, FAO provides ongoing technical skills training and support in participatory forest management and community-based forest enterprise development strategies to professional personnel from the Department of Forestry and other programme-implementing partners. In addition, field trainers or extension workers from diverse technical fields including agriculture, forestry and education have also been recruited and provided with technical training and support in the implementation of the CBFMP. In general, the Training of Trainers (ToT) programme focuses on the following key areas:

- using participatory methods and tools for selecting viable products for the community-based enterprises;
- conducting analysis based on the four areas of Enterprise Development (Social/ Institutional, Science/Technology, Resource/Environment, Market/ Economy);
- conducting surveys (including resource and market surveys) on forest products at district and divisional levels;
- creating interest groups for selected products;
- developing enterprise development plans;
- monitoring the implementation of enterprise plans; and
- linking with appropriate sources of enterprise development support.

The programme partners have also developed a package of educational training materials in local languages for use by field trainers in conducting training activities in the communities. In addition to conducting skills training activities to participating communities, field trainers are also responsible for mobilising communities to participate in the programme as well as for advising participating groups and communities on issues related to general community development, planning and implementation of community-based forest enterprise development projects.

## Community Mobilisation

It is of utmost importance that from the very beginning all the stakeholders including local leaders and authorities of a community, such as chiefs, village heads, elders, household heads and women leaders, as well as forest user groups, are actively involved in all phases of the programme implementation. This includes assessing forest conditions and development of options, planning and implementing management activities.

The mobilisation of the communities to participate in the programme is primarily conducted by field extension workers or trainers and community leaders through community-based sensitisation activities and civic education programmes as depicted in the pictures below:

In addition and in order to ensure local ownership of programme activities, programme implementers also assist participating communities in establishing Community Forest Committees (CFCs) or Village Development Committees whose members are elected by the local population. These Committees are trained by project-implementing partners and are, thereafter, entrusted with the overall responsibility of spearheading / planning, coordinating and managing the implementation of the programme at the local level, including the initiation of skills training and natural resource-based income generating activities. The Committees are also responsible for coordinating the recruitment and training of programme facilitators or instructors as well as for mobilising other community members to participate in the programme.

## PROGRAMME IMPACT

The programme's impact can be seen in different realms:

Policy impact:

- The move towards Community Forest (CF) management and sustainable utilisation, as stated in Forest Act, becomes real
- Participation of communities in participatory forest management increases

Social impact

- Increasing the consideration of gender aspects
- Promoting the benefit of working together, benefiting from a synergy of efforts
- Reducing friction between the stakeholders
- Creating more employment opportunities
- Creating a platform for information exchange

Ecological impact

- An increase in consciousness of forest utilisation methods
- An increase in environmental knowledge and awareness
- A reduction of illegal forest utilisation

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Community Forests management develops a three-year or a five-year management plan based on the forest assessment studies they conduct. The plan is developed by the Communities into a work plan. A copy is sent to the Department of Forestry which would be used as a monitoring and evaluation tool and also a prerequisite for gratis issue of a license for marketing products. A Natural Resource facilitation team is developed in the field which works directly with the Community Forests. The team monitors the farmers' performance and progress based on their own plans and also assesses the constraints and limitations.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Experience demonstrates that the success, effectiveness and sustainability of the CBFMP have largely been a result of:

- the existence of strong working networks between the state, community leaders and local and international NGOs;
- the promotion community ownership of the programme and active participation in programme activities;
- the integration of natural resource conservation activities into income-generating projects; and
- the provision of appropriate and relevant training to all stakeholders (capacity building and skills training).

## SUSTAINABILITY

It can be argued that the long-term sustainability of the CBFMP is assured primarily because the project enjoys the unwavering support of its primary targets and beneficiaries, the rural communities, as well as local and international NGOs. In addition and apart from having assured and long-term funding from international NGOs and the state, the financial sustainability of the programme has also been ensured through the implementation of a benefit sharing scheme. Through this scheme, 15 % of the funds generated by the project go to and are administered by the central government under the

National Forest Fund (NFF) while 85 % remain in the communities. The funds that remain in the communities are used to support various community development initiatives, including the building of schools, mosques, seed stores and community centres, and micro-financing of community-based income-generating projects. This financial arrangement has further motivated local communities to support the programme and participate in it. Last but not least, the active involvement and participation of local communities has also been central to the sustainability of the programme.

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## CONTACT

Mr. Hatab Camara  
 Market Analysis and Development  
 Coordinator  
 Department of Forestry  
 P.O.box 504, Banjul  
 Phone: +22 06 32 13 31 / +22 03 65  
 74 15 / +22 04 22 75 37  
 Fax: +22 04 22 47 65  
 Email: madproservice@yahoo.com /  
 sherifo76@gmail.com

# Literacy and Community Development Programme

## Implementing Organization

Pamoja Ghana

## Language of Instruction

Local language / mother tongue

## Programme Partners

ActionAid Ghana (AAG, main) and Rights and Voices Initiative (RAVI)

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Since gaining independence in 1957, Ghana has increasingly prioritized the development of education and the eradication of illiteracy as a strategy of promoting development and social empowerment. Accordingly, over the past five decades, the State has instituted various educational acts, the most fundamental being the Education Act of 1961 and the 1992 Constitution (article 38, sub-section 2) which laid the legal basis for the provision of education as a basic right for all citizens. Additionally, in order to make education more accessible to all in line with its constitutional obligations, the State in partnership with NGOs has also instituted a number of educational programmes such as the Free and Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE, 1995). As a result of these proactive efforts, the primary and secondary school net enrolments and, by extension, the overall literacy rates have grown steadily over the years. For instance, the youth and adult literacy rates are currently estimated to be 80% and 75%, respectively.

Yet, despite Ghana's educational achievements, illiteracy remains pervasive in the country particularly among women, the poor and in underdeveloped regions. Estimates suggest that about 42% of the adult population is illiterate and about 50% of Ghanaian women are illiterate,

compared with 33% of men. Regional rates of illiteracy also differ sharply. For instance, while the rate of illiteracy in the Greater Accra Region and in Ashanti is 21% and 40% respectively, it rises to an alarming 54% in the Brong Ahafo Region and 76% in the three Northern regions. In light of this, Pamoja Ghana – a network of REFLECT Practitioners from 32 local organizations – has instituted the Literacy and Community Development Programme (LCDP) in an effort to combat illiteracy and to promote socio-economic development and empowerment among the poor and underprivileged groups particularly women and youth.

## THE LITERACY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (LCDP)

The LCDP is an intergenerational, integrated and multilingual literacy and social development programme. It was officially launched by Pamoja Ghana with financial and technical support from Action Aid Ghana (AAG). Since then, Pamoja has established numerous REFLECT learning circles or groups across the entire country and currently, there are about 3,340 active participants. The majority of the active learning circles are in the Northern Regions which, as noted, are not only amongst the poorest but also have some of the highest illiteracy rates in the country. Other participating circles are in Brong Ahafo, Eastern Greater Accra and the western Region.

Although the LCDP is an inclusive literacy and socio-economic development programme which targets every adult person (aged 15 years and above) with little or no formal education, specific efforts are however made to target vulnerable

and often marginalised social groups such as women, youth, prison inmates, nomads and people living with disabilities. Not surprisingly, the programme is more active in rural than in urban settlements.

The LCDP not only facilitates literacy skills development among adults but also provides participants with opportunities to develop practical and sustainable life skills in a wide-range of fields including:

- Health (HIV/AIDS, maternal health, infant mortality, family planning, personal hygiene; sanitation; female genital mutilation; malaria prevention and family nutrition);
- Civic education (leadership training, human rights awareness, human security, democratic governance; conflict management and resolution; gender education including domestic violence, genital mutilation and rape);
- Livelihood skills training/ capacity building (food production and security, income generation and community development);
- Environmental management / conservation.

## Aims and Objectives

The programme endeavours to:

- Combat illiteracy and poverty in the country particularly among the poor and vulnerable groups such as women and youth;
- Empower the poor and vulnerable members of society through literacy and livelihood skills training in order to enable them to identify and find practical and sustainable solutions to the challenges they encounter in daily life as well as to participate fully in community and national development processes;
- Promote personal and societal development;



- Promote gender equity;
- Raise human rights awareness among the poor and vulnerable members of society;
- Promote social networking and organisation for community development.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

### Enrolment of learners

Pamoja employs various strategies to enrol participants into the programme, the most critical being community-based advocacy and awareness campaigns aimed at briefing the community about the importance of the REFLECT programme for personal and community development as well as to encourage adults to participate in the REFLECT learning circles based in their communities. In addition, the Network also encourages current programme participants but especially the established REFLECT Literacy Committees to encourage other members of society to join the learning circles or to assist the circles to identify, plan and implement developmental activities in their communities. In so doing, the programme creates opportunities for entire communities to actively participate in community activities regardless of whether or not they formally belong to a REFLECT learning circle.

### Teaching-Learning Approaches and Methods

Pamoja has established community-based literacy learning circles or groups. Although the programme does not have a fixed curriculum, teaching-learning materials (these are developed locally in order to capture and address local needs and challenges) or official starting dates, learning circles are expected to meet 2 to 4 times a week for about two to three hours, over the two-year duration of the programme.

Pamoja employs the Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques (REFLECT), a right-based, structured and participatory approach to adult learning and social development that uses Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools and materials such as maps, calendars, matrices and diagrams to assist learners in identifying and solving personal and community development challenges. The REFLECT approach to learning is therefore learner-centred and, as such, rather than lecturing to learners, facilitators are encouraged to assist learners to critically analyse their existential needs and problems. For example, what resources they need to solve the problems, where and how they can get the necessary resources and, most importantly, to identify the course of action needed to solve the problems or to satisfy their needs. Active group discussions, debates, simulations and question and answer strategies are therefore

central to the teaching-learning process (see pictures below). In addition, the facilitator is also trained and encouraged to progressively introduce literacy and numeracy skills training into the learning process by highlighting key words, sentences and numbers that are central and relevant to the learning activities. In so doing, the REFLECT approach enables participants not only to acquire or improve their literacy skills but also to gain life skills necessary for personal and community development.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Pamoja engages both internal and external professionals to monitor and evaluate programme activities and learning outcomes on an ongoing basis. Furthermore, officials from Pamoja also undertakes field visits to review the learning process and programme impact.

### PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

#### Impact

The LCDP has had some concrete benefits for both the learners, their families and communities and by extension, the entire nation. Key benefits include:

- Apart from creating opportunities for hundreds of adults and school drop-out children to acquire basic



literacy and life skills, the programme has also supported 3 women, 7 girls and 11 boys from 9 communities to enrol in formal education.

- Many learners have become empowered and moved on to hold positions in the district assemblies in their localities. Others have risen to become elders in their various religions as they can now read and write.
- Many of the young people who had been forced out of school due to, for example, poverty, were assisted to continue learning informally under the programme and eventually to re-enrol in the formal education system or to engage in viable community-based developmental activities.

### Challenges

Despite the positive impact of the programme on the lives of ordinary people, the implementation of the programme has been encumbered by practical and technical challenges including:

Lack of adequate funding: although the programme does not require huge financial investments, the lack of adequate funding has limited Pamoja's ability to expand the programme as well as to finance community projects that learners have identified as being central to their communities' development. The latter is often one of the key factors that demotivates learners from continuing to participate in the programme. Financial challenges

are likely to worsen because Action Aid Ghana – the main sponsor – has reduced funding for the programme.

Turn-over of facilitators: generally, the programme has failed to return trained facilitators due to Pamoja and the learning circles' inability to remunerate them for their services. This has increased programme costs as high-staff turn over has necessitated constant training of new facilitators.

### LESSONS LEARNED

REFLECT programmes are cheap to implement because they require little expertise in the development of the curriculum and teaching-learning materials which, as noted above, are locally developed by the facilitator with support from learning circle members.

The integration of literacy skills training with life skills training and community development projects is critical in motivating adults to participate in learning activities.

### PROGRAMME SUSTAINABILITY

The key indicator of programme sustainability is the fact that communities own the programme and proactively contribute towards its continuity. The programme has also been replicated in other areas. In addition, Pamoja has formulated key

strategies to insure the programme's sustainability. These include:

- Equipping existing REFLECT Circles with the necessary learning resources such as reading and writing materials;
- Allocate funds to support some identified Action Points of Reflect circles;
- Intensification of fundraising efforts;
- Build alliances with networks in education, health, human rights, governance and policy.

### Sources

- Ama Achiaa Amankwah, 12 June 2009; Ghana: Pamoja Forum Recognizes Youth And Adult Literacy As Key to Development
- Aryeetey, E. and Kwakye, E. (2005) Policy case study: Functional Literacy, National Functional Programme (NFLP II) in Ghana

### CONTACT

Millicent Akoto  
National Coordinator  
Pamoja Ghana Reflect Network,  
P. O. Box LG 233, Legon,  
Accra. Ghana  
Phone: (233) 243 212 754  
Email contact: akotmillicent@yahoo.co.uk; pamojaghana@yahoo.co.uk.

## NAMIBIA

# NaDEET Environmental Literacy Projects

### Implementing Organization

Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust (NaDEET)

### Language of Instruction

English and mother tongue (with translation and teacher assistance)

### Funding

European Union local grant (about 50%); UNESCO and other UN agencies (10%); local company grants (10%); participants own contribution (10%); and private individuals/donors (20%).

### Programme Partners

Funding: European Commission, UNESCO, UNDP-Global Environment Fund, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit  
 Implementing: Ministry of Education, Namibian Environmental Education Network, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, UNESCO; Others – Namibian Environment Wildlife Society, Freundschaft mit NaDEET, Wilde Ganzen, Biosphere Expeditions.

### Annual Programme Costs

N \$400,000 (USD 37,600)

### Annual cost per learner

Varies depending on how the learner is engaged (for example, a NaDEET centre programme costs N \$800 – or USD 75 – per person, while a partner organisation implementing the publications in the classroom has a cost of N \$5 – or USD 0.09 – per learner).

## COUNTRY CONTEXT

Education has been a national priority in Namibia since independence was achieved in 1990. The Namibian government has a policy of financing literacy programmes and allocates almost a quarter (22%) of its budget to education (UNESCO, 2014). The Ministry of Education has increased

funding through the Directorate of Adult Literacy.

Improving literacy is not the only educational challenge facing Namibia. The lack of awareness of environmental issues is another pressing concern, stemming largely from poor understanding of the definition, causes and impacts of environmental problems. For example, many Namibians misunderstand the concept of climate change and use the term to refer to normal weather events. This is particularly problematic given the negative impact climate change continues to have on Namibian communities. Many Namibians do not believe that their actions can make a difference, while others are unsure what to do to improve the environment. There is a long-standing need for better environmental education in the country.

Namibian environmental education began in the late 1980s and the early 1990s when the government, in partnership with a number of non-governmental organizations, established the first 'true' environmental education centres for Namibian youth. Outdoor camps had existed before but were more focused on survival training rather than the environment. The new centres, which still exist today, are primarily located north of Windhoek, in areas like Etosha National Park, and are focused on nature and wildlife.

A group of passionate citizens felt there was a need for environmental education for Namibians living in the Namib Desert. They started the Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust (NaDEET), a non-profit organization offering environmental education, with a centre on the NamibRand Nature Reserve in Namibia's southern Hardap Region.

The centre was established in 2003 by a construction manager, a small

team of assistants and three groups of Raleigh International volunteers. At the time, funds were extremely limited and the centre was built primarily using recycled materials donated by individuals. Almost everything was done by hand as there were few power tools available. The centre had six accommodation units with shower and toilet facilities and a main building (which included a classroom and kitchen).

NaDEET's founders soon noticed a 'disconnect' between what was being taught and what was being learned. Rather than being a model of environmental living in everything that it did, the centre was purely focused on its subject and did not take a sufficiently holistic approach. It made little sense to teach students about reducing environmental impact while taps leaked in the centre's bathrooms. The centre proposed a 'practice what we teach' approach and has since integrated this philosophy into its infrastructure and teaching practices. NaDEET believes that the facility itself plays a major part in the learning experience of participants. All the facilities (bathroom, stove, bed, etc.) are designed in a way to inspire the people studying at the centre to integrate the principles of sustainability into their daily lives.

To fulfil its aims, NaDEET has established environmental education programmes at its centre, as well as an environmental literacy project and community development through outreach activity.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The environmental literacy project complements the core programme of environmental education at the NaDEET centre and the outreach and community development work. These programmes give participants first-hand experience of sustainable living.

Participants are taught to understand environmental problems and their solutions, in theory, with a range of environmental publications supporting practical activities. Children and adult (mostly rural women) participants learn about sustainability, biodiversity and the balance between humans and the environment. They learn not just by seeing and hearing, but by doing and living. At the NaDEET centre, theory meets practice so that participants are empowered to make a difference in their homes and communities.

NaDEET's environmental literacy project aims to produce locally written and relevant literature about the Namibian natural environment and sustainable living. The publications on environmental literacy (presented below) are a core component of the project, reinforcing and deepening participants' understanding of the environment. They give students the opportunity to reflect on their real-life experiences and learn the value of written literature as a means of gaining more information.

The project's publications target a broad audience and take a fun and creative approach to giving readers the resources they need to tackle environmental issues. The publications are:

### Bush Telegraph

The Bush Telegraph is a youth magazine, available for free to learners, educators and citizens in Namibia. Since its inception, its readership has grown from just 500 to more than 18,000 (around half of the readership of the Namibian national newspaper). The Bush Telegraph is produced twice a year and covers a variety of environmental topics relevant to Namibia. It is estimated that some 72,000 readers have been engaged in the topic through articles, activity suggestions, games, contests and pictures.

### It's Time to...

The It's Time to... series of booklets aims to promote sustainability to a wider audience. It comprises six publications:

**It's Time to Grow:** a pre-primary environmental pack that includes four small booklets, a growth chart, a pack of crayons and seed paper to plant.

**It's Time to Change:** a primary-school activity workbook.

**It's Time to Work:** a secondary-school career guide to technical and vocational training in a green economy.

**It's Time to be Efficient:** a guide for adults to managing a sustainable household.

**It's Time to Solar Cook:** a solar cooking guide for adults.

**It's Time to Identify:** a biodiversity identification booklet for all ages.

Around 60,000 It's Time to... booklets have been distributed directly to schools and at environmental education workshops in order to reinforce the sustainability practices taught at the centre. The publications are also available to the public as free PDFs downloadable from the centre's website.

### Aims and Objectives

NaDEET, as an organization, aims to encourage Namibians to participate in finding practical solutions to local and national environmental issues and to create a healthy and sustainable future for all. The following aims guide the organisation:

- To provide a non-profit environmental education service for all, especially those from underprivileged areas of Namibia.
- To build capacity at all levels of the environmental education sector, focused on addressing relevant environmental issues, supporting the Namibian school curriculum, and practising hands-on, experiential learning and learner-centred educational methods.
- To engage in education, advocacy and awareness of the critical role of sustainable living in a finite, semi-arid environment.

NaDEET's environmental literacy project aims:

- To provide ongoing publications on environmental issues for Namibians in an easy-to-read format.
- To maintain and foster a forum for school children, teachers and environmental education practitioners to learn and share about the Namibian environment and the challenges it faces.
- To increase and improve the environmental literature available to Namibian readers in their own country.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Structure and Mechanism

The environmental literature is delivered in the following ways:

#### NaDEET centre programmes:

Participants come in organized groups of up to 40 for a residential programme lasting from Monday to Friday.

**NaDEET outreach:** Follow-up and additional outreach is conducted with three selected communities and on demand.

**Direct mailing:** Readers can sign up to the Bush Telegraph subscriber list to receive two issues per annum.

**Partners (e.g. schools and other NGOs):** They request copies of specific publications to support their educational learning activities.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

The duration of the courses varies. The NaDEET centre runs approximately 30 one-week programmes each year, as well as outreach programmes from one day in duration. Partners also offer programmes of varying length. The NaDEET programme runs in various locations, with the main activities taking place at its centre. Each year, between 18,000 and 20,000 learners participate, more than 80% of them continuing students. The average number of learners per group is 40. The programme takes a hands-on, experiential approach to learning, offering a range of activities, from



theoretical to practical learning, which are applied in sustainable living practices. There is also an emphasis on team-work and cooperation. Here is an example of how water conservation is taught at the NaDEET centre's primary-school programme, with photographs illustrating each stage:

In the first photograph, children are asked to recall what they have learned in school by drawing a water cycle in their sustainable-living journals.

Water cycle concepts of evaporation and transpiration are tested out and explored in nature.

The importance of saving water and knowing how much is used is practised during the daily water count.

Sustainable living practices are implemented through the use of a personal 'recycled' water bottle.

### Programme Content and Teaching Material

The content of the materials is determined by NaDEET's overall mission, current affairs, and relevant international days, as promoted by

the United Nations. The materials used are various, including, though not limited to, journals, booklets and experimental material. The content is related to the environment and focused on the four main areas of energy, water, waste and biodiversity. Material is developed by NaDEET's staff under the guidance of the director. It draws inspiration and relevance from the centre-based programmes. Activities are tested out by programme participants.

### Recruitment and Training of Facilitators

NaDEET has grown to employ nine permanent staff members, supported by several interns and volunteers. NaDEET opened a small head office in Swakopmund at the beginning of 2014 in order to make the procedures more efficient, develop strategic partnerships and expand operations to other areas of the country. The organization is governed by a board of trustees. The facilitators involved in the programme are full-time, paid employees. Remuneration ranges from N \$10,000 to N \$30,000 (equivalent to between USD 940 and USD 2,820). The facilitator/learner ratio is one facilitator to every 20 learners.

All facilitators are qualified in nature conservation and/or education and are given additional in-house training. NaDEET offers an education training programme once a year.

### Learner Assessment

The programme targets school children, out-of-school youth, adults with poor literacy, women and girls, and minority groups. Learners are recruited through school visits and the sending out of invitations to visit NaDEET. Today, most participants are drawn from schools which have previously taken part in the project, with some new schools which heard about the programme through word of mouth. Needs are determined in conjunction with the school principal and accompanying teachers. The appropriate programme level and content are assigned accordingly. As the project is implemented through a variety of mechanisms, methods of monitoring and evaluation vary. NaDEET's main monitoring and evaluation activities take place at its centre in the form of surveys, conducted before and after the programme, which measure awareness and understanding of environmental topics. These are analysed annually to identify areas



that need further improvements and to measure changes in behaviour and attitudes of programme participants with regard to sustainable development. The development of the project's publications involves their being piloted with various relevant audiences wherever possible. The centre has no accreditation mechanism. Throughout the programme participants are asked questions and, at the end of the week, participate in an environmental quiz to assess what they have learned. In some groups, a 'Certificate of Participation' is offered. The enthusiastic feedback of participants remains the clearest indicator of success.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

An evaluation of the programme is conducted annually, considering the percentage of returning schools, increases in readership numbers, and other ad hoc feedback. An example of this is the feedback received from a partner organization, which reported using the Bush Telegraph as a learning material for an environmental studies class for technical and vocational training students. The centre has conducted informal evaluations of its publications and

is awaiting feedback from a formal evaluation of its pre-primary school publication. The programme also relies on progress indicators such as increasing participation (over 9,000 participants at the centre over 10 years) and the thousands of readers whose continuing interest is a clear signal of the value of the work.

### IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

An external evaluation (conducted by Ashby Associates) was commissioned in 2013 to assess the impact the programme has had on participants. There is a link to the report at the end of this case study. The results varied depending on the level of engagement and the community to which the learner belonged. The project's ongoing outreach efforts provide an opportunity to work with communities and enable them to assess the value and relevance of the programme. NaDEET's environmental literacy project has achieved a great deal over the years, including:

1. A relatively high print-run of 18,000 copies for the Bush Telegraph, illustrating the demand from readers for this publication.
2. The sustainability of the project's publications, which have been produced for more than 11 years, demonstrating the financial commitment of the donors and the institutional capacity.
3. Local and international recognition of its publications, which have received a number of Eco-Media Awards, leading to the work being showcased at UNESCO events worldwide.
4. The cost-effectiveness of the programme, due to its being integrated within other activities and its use of partnerships to distribute materials to institutions, such as the Ministry of Education, after-school programmes and environmental clubs, where teachers use the material in their lesson plans.
5. Reaching a wide range of readers with the project's publications, from pre-primary to pensioners, and ensuring wide access to the programme by targeting rural areas in the south of Namibia. More than half of all participants are women.

## CHALLENGES

One of the biggest challenges concerns access to NaDEET's environmental literacy materials. At present, NaDEET does not have the resources to publish its materials in languages other than English and Afrikaans. It would like to publish both the Bush Telegraph and the It's Time to... series in the 11 different indigenous languages spoken in Namibia. However, the costs and logistics involved would require enormous additional resources that would put the project's financial sustainability at risk. As more and more people in Namibia gain access to smart phones and the internet, it would seem prudent and cost-effective to switch from print to online publishing. However, the fact that not all Namibians have equal access to information and communication technology, means that a switch to online publishing would run contrary to NaDEET's objective of reaching the most underprivileged and neediest in society. The current challenge is to meet the needs of both audiences so as to remain relevant.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The biggest area where improvement is needed is in developing formal channels for the distribution of NaDEET's publications. As a non-profit organization, NaDEET has often organized distribution through other non-profits or at special events. Future efforts should focus on getting the materials approved through the national body and thereby recognized and endorsed for schools to purchase. This would be in addition to the current approach, as it would reach a different audience in a new way. If more funding was available, NaDEET would employ a dedicated staff member or team to develop this. Currently, the focus is on the publications and not the accessibility of the information to the reader.

## SUSTAINABILITY

The project is integrated within all of NaDEET's activities, utilising existing human and institutional capacity and thereby reducing overall costs as much as possible. NaDEET uses a

variety of approaches to ensure the financial sustainability of the project and to become more independent of donors. Currently, the majority of publications are externally funded. However, NaDEET has moved from a publication-to-publication approach to funding to a longer-term, project-based funding approach that includes the publications as key to the programme's overall objectives. For some publications, the programme has gained permission from the original funders to sell copies in order to generate additional income, which it uses to fund more books for participants. This approach has been especially successful with the It's Time to Identify booklet, the next print run of which has been fully financed by book sales. In addition, because the project is integrated within existing methods and approaches, and operates in a variety of settings, the local capacity to sustain the work is strong. The track record over 11 years shows that this method works and makes good results achievable. While no other organization replicates what NaDEET does, many partners have been motivated to change their approaches to environmental education by the environmental literacy project. More than 9,000 children and adults have attended NaDEET's centre to participate in the programme, with a very high rate of return among partner schools. The Bush Telegraph and It's Time to... booklet series are widely distributed and have twice won first place in the Namibian EcoMedia Awards. Many past interns now work as environmental educators around the country.

## INNOVATION

One of the most innovative features of the NaDEET approach is its philosophy of 'practising what is taught'. NaDEET takes pride in integrating the principles of sustainability into all facets of its operation, whether programme-related or administrative. The NaDEET centre gives participants an opportunity to learn about the principles of sustainable living, and environmental audits are conducted to monitor water, energy and waste consumption. The same approach is reflected in the environmental literacy materials. It is an inspiration to participants, who, in turn, share

what they have learned with their communities. A recent example is an issue of the Bush Telegraph on solutions to pollution, which provided step-by-step instructions to assist in the construction of alternative fuel 'bricks' from paper litter. Participants learn about this at the NaDEET centre and can use the publication to demonstrate what they have learned to their family and community members, thereby increasing the environmental awareness and understanding of the whole community.

## CONTACT

Viktoria Keding  
Director  
Email: [vkeding@nadeet.org](mailto:vkeding@nadeet.org)  
Telephone/fax: 081-367-5310  
Address: PO Box 8702,  
Swakopmund; 3 Antonius  
Garden, Nathaniel Maxuiliili Street,  
Swakopmund, Namibia  
Website: <http://www.nadeet.org>

## SENEGAL

# Associates in Research and Education for Development (ARED)

**Language of Instruction**  
Pulaar and French

**Date of Inception**  
1990

## CONTEXT

Associates in Research & Education for Development (ARED) focuses its activities on northern Senegal. It has established links with a highly active grassroots initiative to promote literacy in Pulaar (also known as Fulfulde), which is the mother tongue of many of the area's inhabitants and is spoken by more than 25 million people across the Sahel.

## PROGRAMME

ARED is dedicated to developing reading and learning materials in African languages. Materials are first written in Pulaar, in order to assess whether or not they match the needs and levels of new literates. After this, they are adapted to other dialects of Fulfulde, other West African languages or translated into French.

ARED was created in 1990 in order to publish books for new literates and help other programmes in their training activities. It does not implement literacy programmes of its own, but instead responds to requests for training courses and books from local associations, other NGOs and bi-lateral projects. It aims to go beyond the provision of basic and functional literacy materials by producing complex materials – centring on local law, the impact of development projects and the development of a civil society, amongst others – as well as providing reading materials in the form of novels, poetry, history and compendiums of local knowledge. ARED is also one of the few publishers in West Africa

that produces books that encourage reading for pleasure, enabling new readers to identify with the story and the characters rather than see reading as a means of learning something new. It currently responds to requests for materials from organizations in Senegal, Mali, Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger.

## Objectives

ARED's main objectives are to:

- test and publish learner-centred training materials in African languages for the growing non-formal education sector;
- mobilise human resources within the community to take charge of their own systems of education, as well as train them for this task, thereby placing control over education into the hands of the community;
- provide support to existing programmes in the field;
- provide culturally-relevant books which people enjoy reading, thus reinforcing their ability to use the written word by emphasising the connections between culture, language, reading and education; and
- provide current information and analytical tools through books and training which help individuals and community groups to analyse their situation, become more proactive, make informed choices and plan appropriate responses.

The programmes supported by ARED focus on developing basic literacy skills, leadership and organizational capacities and providing information on citizenship and civil society so that people can make informed choices and reach their own goals through increased access to education and information. ARED also provides some of the tools needed for change and action at the community level

by continuously developing curricula which address the tasks that all adults undertake – be they leaders, decision-makers, elected officials, groups advocating for change, or simply citizens trying to meet the needs of their families.

## Target Groups

ARED seeks ways to incorporate marginalised groups into an educational process that meets their needs as busy working adults. These groups include:

- Adolescents who have not had the opportunity to start or complete primary school education. ARED strives to provide this group with "basic education" (equivalent to, but not limited to, primary school education).
- Women who have been unable to attend school, and whose busy working lives do not permit them to attend formal school on a regular basis.
- Marginalised social groups (e.g. minority ethnic groups/language groups) who are often not adequately integrated into decision-making processes.
- Community organizers and leaders who need to be better prepared to assume their roles and responsibilities.

## Thematic Areas

ARED has already tested and developed training courses and materials on a variety of topics. Community associations are free to choose the topics that best meet their needs. All of the existing topics listed below include one or more books in the local language.

**Literacy and maths skills – Local literacy teachers are required to**

take three courses, each lasting 90 hours. These teachers then go on to teach a minimum of one 300-hour programme in their communities.

**Negotiated conflict resolution** – A 100-hour training course that enables participants to identify and analyse conflicts (especially those between herders and farmers in the Sahel), and achieve a win-win outcome. It also covers the process of mediation in depth.

**Civil society** – ARED has developed several modules, each lasting between 35 and 70 hours, to reinforce the role of civil society, especially in rural and/or poor areas of Senegal. These modules include an explanation of land tenure law, the forestry code, the new rural code, the role of locally-elected officials, the rights and responsibilities of citizens and the role of the three branches of government (executive, legislative and judiciary).

**Participatory analysis of local conditions** – This visual method, originally referred to as a “rapid rural appraisal” and now more commonly known as a “participatory rural analysis”(PRA), is a means of bringing together community groups to analyse various issues of importance. ARED organises a number of training courses lasting between 35 and 70 hours each to help groups work together to study environmental issues, learn about the interaction between families and the community, investigate livelihood sources, etc.

**Organization building** – In the rural Sahel today, hundreds of local associations are being created to address community issues. To support this process, several training courses of 35 to 70 hours each have been developed, helping community groups learn how to create an association, identify the legal implications involved, write budgets, manage and run a community centre, and so on.

**Pastoralism** – A 100-hour training course covering the most relevant and topical aspects of herding in the Sahel today, including an analysis of the existing system of herding, the concepts underpinning development projects and legislation from all of the Sahelian countries.



**HIV and AIDS** – While many HIV and AIDS programmes focus on the disease itself, and/or the care of those suffering from it, ARED offers a 35-hour training course which focuses on bringing community members together to discuss the social practices which ignore or promote the spread of the disease, and identifying ways in which community groups can come together to face their social responsibilities.

**Culture, literature and indigenous knowledge** – For a person to develop fully, it is crucial that the value of their own cultural knowledge systems receive official recognition. ARED offers 20-hour training courses to enable the publication of 25 books comprising works of literature, historical accounts and overviews of local knowledge systems.

### Teaching and Learning Approach

Training activities vary in length (from 20 to 100 hours) and are carried out in local communities, both rural and urban. Although each training activity is accompanied by a book in the language in which the course is being held, it is not assumed that everybody attending the training courses is literate. There is a deliberate attempt to bring together a mix of community members; including youth (aged

between 15 and 30) and adults (aged between 30 and 70), men and women, literate community members and those who are unable to read and write. This mix of participants is crucial for both the sharing and the storing of information and since classes are learner-centred, they depend on participants’ sharing of knowledge and experiences.

ARED programmes provide participatory, learner-centred education in African languages to both individual learners and local communities. Literacy materials interwoven with RRA (rapid rural appraisal) tools have been developed for learners who cannot attend literacy classes on a regular basis, so that they can learn at home, at their own pace. All books and training provisions are designed to bring various members of the community together so that they can analyse and respond more effectively to the situations with which they find themselves confronted. ARED’s aim is not to “teach”, but to create an environment in which people can communicate and share knowledge with each other while learning new and relevant information.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

Since 1992, over 150 titles have been edited, 800,000 books sold, and more than 450 training courses

carried out, attended by more than 9,000 participants, future literacy teachers and/or community activists.

### LESSONS LEARNED

"We are fortunate to work in a context where the community sees the value of Pulaar literacy. However, our *gift* back to others is to demonstrate how the community can be involved, the importance of having culturally-relevant materials (not just functional materials) and how far a new literate can go in his or her learning after only a few hundred hours of training."

Sonja Fagerberg-Diallo (ARED)

It is important to note that Pulaar language education can be introduced in such a way that the community becomes an actor in the process of defining the form, role and value that it should take. The key element in this process appears to be the cultural resonance that education in Pulaar has found. Consequently, the pursuit of education is no longer associated with cultural alienation, as is so often the case with formal education in French. Instead, it is seen as both a valuable contribution to local development initiatives and a means of preserving culture that integrates new ideas into existing social and intellectual systems. Hence, the key to ARED's success lies in the link that it has forged between cultural identity and literacy. Because training course participants become more knowledgeable citizens and are better able to work together, they are in a position to play a key role in their communities. They may choose to join and contribute to a community association or lobby for interests that are all too often ignored. Alternatively, they may succeed in making the voices of marginalised people, such as women, heard in community groups.

It is striking that participants do not view literacy classes or training courses as a set of mechanical skills or information that must be learned, but rather as a process of empowerment made possible by the exchange between participants, and between the self and the written word.



ARED is continuously looking to establish good partnerships. It is this network of like-minded individuals that allows it to strengthen its capacities, reach more learners and be more productive.

Participants have written to ARED to explain how it has improved their lives. Here are some excerpts from their letters:

- "Learning to read woke me up."
- "Having learned to participate in a class, I now dare to work in a group."
- "I can now stand in the middle of a group and speak my mind."
- "I learned that men and women can be equal when they work together."
- "Learning to read has made me a more humble and forgiving person."
- "Knowing myself, I can now be more open to others."
- "I now know my own mind, and refuse to be tricked."
- "In the past it was always French-speaking experts who came to tell us what to do. Now is it our own children who are helping us analyse our situation."

- Income from the sale of books, which covers more than 50 percent of printing costs.
- Local participation in the cost of training.
- Grants from long-term (6–10 years) partners who support the programme's vision, core costs and specific activities.
- Income for services provided.

### CONTACT

Awa Ka Dia  
President  
NINEA 006 3 719  
Villa 3074 Amitié 1  
BP 10 737  
Dakar - Liberté  
Sénégal  
E-Mail: [ared@enda.sn](mailto:ared@enda.sn)

### FUNDING

Four types of funding are available:

## SOUTH AFRICA

# Adult Literacy and Skills Training Programme (ALSTP)

### Implementing Organization

Operation Upgrade of South Africa

### Language of Instruction

Mother-tongue(s) and English as second language

### Funding

National Lottery; ProLiteracy Worldwide; OXFAM Australia; Rotary Club of Umhlanga and the Rotary District Literacy Committee.

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Although South Africa has made significant progress in providing universal access to education, an estimated 9 million people cannot read or write. A vast majority of these are adult women living in poor and remote rural areas. For example, it is estimated that the province of KwaZulu-Natal alone has about two million illiterate people. Furthermore – and similarly to other rural areas – only 26% of a total population of approx. 26,000 in KwaNibela (a remote rural area in KwaZulu-Natal province) is literate. High rates of illiteracy among most adult South Africans are a result of the segregationist apartheid policies and have been further exacerbated by a continued lack of development in rural areas. Illiteracy has a profound socio-economic impact on rural families, perpetuating cycles of poverty (due to limited productive capacity, a lack of the skills needed to gain formal employment, an inability to educate children, insufficient access to basic social services and a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS). The challenges facing women are compounded by the increased migration of males to urban areas in search of employment. As a result, women struggle to sustain their families (averaging 5 children and 2 adult dependants) by eking out

a meagre livelihood from family land. Needless to say, this has profoundly undermined their ability to break out of the vicious cycle of poverty and educate their children. Recognising that illiteracy is both the cause and the effect of numerous social challenges, Operation Upgrade – a national NGO founded in 1966 to assist poor people with development projects – initiated the Adult Literacy and Skills Training Programme (ALSTP) in 2003 in an effort to promote social change and development in marginalised and socially disadvantaged rural communities.

## ADULT LITERACY AND SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMME (ALSTP)

Since 1966, Operation Upgrade (OpUp) has – with financial and technical support from many organizations, including Oxfam Australia, ProLiteracy Worldwide Int. and local chapters of Rotary International – been working with poor South Africans through literacy and development projects. In 2003, OpUp initiated ALSTP, which encompasses the KwaNibela Project that won the 2008 UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy. The ALSTP emerged as a proactive response to practical needs of and challenges facing poor, rural-based households. It is a multi-faceted family-based literacy and development project that is being implemented in socially disadvantaged and remote rural areas such as KwaNibela. The programme primarily targets adult women – and, to some extent, men, children and youth – aged 25 to 50 years.

Using an integrated approach to literacy skills training and community development, the programme offers mother-tongue literacy, English as

a second language, numeracy and theme-based training in:

- livelihood development: income generation, food production/security and preservation;
- health education: HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, child-care, home-based care for the sick, reproductive health, nutrition and sanitation;
- civic/life skills education: human rights, gender relations, conflict management and resolution; and
- sustainable environmental conservation.

Essentially, therefore, OpUp views literacy not merely as the ability to read and write, but as a major vehicle for holistic social change and community development. In light of this, OpUp uses ALSTP to promote literacy among learners through developmental activities that addresses their basic and practical needs, thus helping them to break out of the cycle of poverty. As the OpUp Director, Pat Dean, said, to be effective “literacy classes must reflect the social context. So while English is an option for the learners, HIV and AIDS and food security are part of almost every lesson. You cannot be in a literacy class if you can’t feed your children.” This basic principle has shaped the objectives of ALSTP.

## Aims and Objectives

The ALSTP endeavours to:

- promote social change and development through adult literacy and adult basic education;
- combat illiteracy among rural women in order to enhance their skills, thus making them more productive, enabling them to generate income and alleviating poverty;

- empower women to be active agents of community development;
- improve public awareness of fundamental and constitutionally-guaranteed human rights, including access to basic health and education services;
- increase the capacity of women to fend for their families and thus to improve their standards of life; and
- increase public awareness about healthy living, including nutrition and HIV/AIDS prevention.

In order to achieve these goals, the programme:

- develops and implements a structured literacy curriculum that is relevant to learners' needs;
- trains literacy facilitators and harnesses their social contacts and communication skills to spread information about community development, education and HIV/AIDS prevention and care;
- develop literacy learning materials that support HIV and AIDS prevention and care, human rights, family health and livelihood development; and
- ensure food security by constructing vegetable production tunnels and water systems, including rainwater harvesting systems.

### PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

#### Recruitment and Training of Facilitators

OpUp's community-based programmes are promoted through a network of literacy facilitators and each facilitator is responsible for a group of 15 to 20 learners. Since the inception of ALSTP, OpUp has trained about 350 community-based literacy educators as HIV and AIDS educators and home-based care givers. Literacy and community development facilitators should fulfil at least some of the following criteria:

- They should be nominated by their communities (i.e. they should be local people recruited through community structures).
- They should have a Matriculation (school-leaving) certificate with pass-

es in Zulu, English and mathematics. However, as most facilitators do not have English and Mathematics, OpUp provides them with basic training in these areas.

- They should have proven their commitment to social services by undertaking voluntary community work.
- They should demonstrate social and attitudinal maturity.
- They should be self-motivated and good social mobilisers.

Facilitators receive ongoing training in adult education/literacy and community development for a total of 60 days, covering the following courses:

- Introduction to adult basic education and teaching first-language literacy (20 days).
- Teaching English as a second language (10 days).
- Teaching numeracy (10 days).
- HIV/AIDS prevention, counselling and home care (12 days).
- Vegetable tunnel management (3 days).
- Leather craft (6 days).

Most critically, facilitators are also trained in the use of various teaching-learning methods, including the use of cultural practices and a variety of teaching materials. In addition, theme-based instruction is provided in order to enable facilitators to, simultaneously, promote literacy skills acquisition, health and human rights awareness and livelihood or community development practices. Thus, the facilitators are trained to use relevant social issues and themes, such as domestic violence, HIV/AIDS and reproductive health, as the basis for their literacy classes. The language used by the learners themselves during theme-based discussions is then used to promote reading and word recognition. Similarly, numeracy learning often uses examples of income generation as the basis for learning how to recognise numbers and to calculate. Through the use of these socially-relevant themes and participatory teaching-learning methods, the learners acquire functional literacy skills and knowledge about a range of issues, rather than abstract reading and writing skills, and take personal or group action to address the key issues affecting their communities.

Apart from teaching methodologies, the facilitators are also trained to identify learners' concerns needs and address them using appropriate strategies and projects. They are also taught to design lessons and develop appropriate materials based on themes that they have identified.

#### Enrolment of Learners

The mobilisation and recruitment of learners is a collective endeavour involving the active participation of the community (through the community literacy committees – CLCs), trained facilitators, local leaders (such as church and community leaders) and OpUp. Once potential learners have been identified, the facilitators assess their learning needs before placing them in appropriate literacy classes. They also consult with them to formulate a teaching-learning timetable. The active involvement of learners from the outset is necessary not only to ensure community ownership of the programme but in order to design a literacy programme that best addresses the specific needs of the learners. It also cultivates and sustains learners' motivation to participate in the programme.

#### Teaching-Learning Approaches and Methods

The ALSTP endeavours to teach learners fundamental literacy and livelihood skills progressively over a minimum period of ten months. While the ultimate objective is to make learners functionally literate, the initial focus of literacy classes is to develop mother-tongue literacy skills, which are in turn used as the basis for learning English and numeracy skills. A variety of interactive and participatory teaching-learning methods are employed during literacy classes, including:

- problem-solving;
- role play (simulations);
- drama, dance and music; and
- story-telling and group discussions.

Facilitators are also encouraged to use real-life and relevant examples as the basis for teaching and learning. For example, during learning sessions, learners are often divided into groups

and encouraged to discuss issues of relevance to their respective communities. The discussions are then used to nurture speaking, writing, reading, comprehension and word recognition skills. Often, a topic is first presented and discussed in the mother tongue. Thereafter, groups of learners are instructed to work on exercises designed to develop English-language vocabulary, accompanied by reading and writing activities on that topic. Plenty of dialogue work, role play and learning games are used. A similar approach is also used in teaching numeracy, with examples often being drawn from livelihood or income generation activities.

The following project activities are used to further illustrate the way in which the methodologies used to facilitate literacy skills training and community development are linked within the ALSTP framework.

In response to learners' demand for income-generation or livelihood skills training, OpUp developed three main projects:

#### **The vegetable tunnel system**

This project is used to teach literacy through the production of a variety of vegetables (market gardening) such as spinach, tomatoes, green peppers and chillies. OpUp provides a tunnel to a group of 20 learners who, in turn, manage it as a cooperative business venture. Accordingly, the learners are taught how to manage intra-group dynamics, organize work rosters, keep sales records, deposit money in the bank, and pack and market their products. Apart from being a source of secure and nutritious food for their families, the food tunnels also represent a small-scale business enterprise that generates income for the learners through the sale of surplus produce. The capacity to generate extra capital has enabled women to improve their families' living standards and support their children's education. Furthermore, and equally importantly, cooperative engagement has improved communal/social relations.

#### **Literacy for Health**

The biggest challenge in South Africa and for OpUp in recent years has

been the need to harness literacy classes as a vehicle for promoting public awareness of and addressing the HIV/AIDS crisis. Returning labour migrants have fuelled the HIV/AIDS pandemic in most rural areas and women are often forced to act as primary care givers. Women are also at risk of being infected and it is therefore imperative to provide them with information on HIV/AIDS prevention and access to medical services. Thus, literacy classes provide concrete educational opportunities for behavioural change, self-protection and care-giving. Essentially, therefore, HIV/AIDS education must now be an intrinsic component of any literacy and development programme.

To this end, OpUp has trained literacy educators to incorporate HIV/AIDS education into literacy training as well as to act as effective community-based HIV/AIDS counsellors and home based care givers/workers. HIV/AIDS-related stories are used as the basis for discussions and learning during literacy classes. Prevention and care have thus been included as literacy lesson topics, with many good results. The learners have generally responded very positively to the information on AIDS provided in the lessons and have gone on to establish community action projects to help people living with HIV/AIDS.

#### **PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES**

Facilitators and OpUp officials assess the programme's achievements and challenges on an ongoing basis. Learning outcomes are partly measured by means of literacy examinations administered by OpUp at the end of the learning session (participants are also free to sit public examinations for literacy learners). Meanwhile, the effectiveness of livelihood programmes is often measured by assessing the extent to which community development projects such as the vegetable tunnels have improved participants' living standards. The programme has also been evaluated by external professionals, including:

**Crisp (2003):** which examined and assessed the synergies between HIV/AIDS and literacy training; and

**Rotary International (2008):** which assessed the psychosocial impact (in terms of cognitive skills, personality, self-esteem, attitudes, etc) of literacy learning on learners in KwaNibela.

Overall, external evaluators have unanimously applauded OpUp's integrated approach, which focuses simultaneously on individual literacy achievements, skills development and change within the community as indicators of the programme's on-the-ground relevance and applicability.

#### **Impact/Achievements**

ALSTP has had a considerable impact on the lives of rural communities by improving literacy levels, boosting productivity, increasing standards of living and promoting awareness of basic human rights and HIV/AIDS. Each year, 430 learners attend literacy classes and benefit from other integrated projects.

Literacy levels among learners have improved significantly and, as a result, they are now able to conduct their everyday activities more independently. The following story bears testimony to the programme's success:

"I have five children. Each child has a clinic card bearing his or her name. But if one of the children got sick, I did not know which card to take. I had to take the sick child and all five cards and ask the clinic sister to find the right one. The nurses laughed at me. I would delay taking my children to clinic because I was embarrassed and ashamed. This all ended after attending the literacy classes."

Another of the programme's major achievements has been the establishment, by the learners, of income-generating projects such as the vegetable tunnels. These tunnels are now a critical source of food security, providing participating families with both nutritious vegetables and an income. This has raised living standards in rural households and enabled them to access basic social services such as health and education for children. Indeed, the vegetable tunnel project has proven so successful that one of the groups (in KwaNibela) has been given a contract to supply spinach to

a major South African supermarket group.

Public awareness of health issues (especially HIV/AIDS, nutrition, sanitation) and sustainable environmental conservation has also improved, as demonstrated by the wide use of rainwater harvesting systems. In addition, the HIV/AIDS programme has resulted in many infected people from learner families being taken to clinics for treatment or receiving effective home-based care. Overall, the programme has enabled learners to form a new sense of self in relation to the way in which they now interact with their environment.

The contribution of OpUp towards combating the scourge of illiteracy and promoting social change and community development through training has been widely applauded, both locally and internationally. As a result, the programme has received a number of awards, including:

- the Rotary International Award for Service Excellence (September 2005);
- ProLiteracy Worldwide's Ann Michel Award for International Innovation in Literacy (October 2005); and
- accreditation for OpUp's first-language literacy facilitator training course by the University of South Africa (1996).

In addition, OpUp has received two highly-coveted awards, one local and one international:

- In 1996, President Nelson Mandela, together with the National Department of Education, presented Operation Upgrade with the 1996 Presidential Award for Adult Basic Education and Training.
- In 2008, OpUp was awarded the UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy in recognition of its sterling work and innovative approaches to literacy training and livelihood development.

### CHALLENGES

Despite the positive impact that the programme has had, its success continues to be marred by practical challenges arising primarily from a lack of adequate funding. Key challenges are:

- restricted personnel and resources, which limits the amount of follow-up training that programme graduates can receive;
- a shortage of reading materials for home-based study (although income-generating projects were introduced to help maintain literacy and numeracy skills, most learners nonetheless relapse into semi-literacy if they do not have access to adequate reading materials);
- a lack of remuneration for community-based mobilisers and facilitators, which has led to a shortage of personnel; and
- the difficulty of identifying income-generating projects which require a minimum investment of initial capital yet are capable of generating enough income to meet learners' needs.

### LESSONS LEARNED

The implementation of the programme has revealed critical lessons that apply to any literacy skills training and community development programme:

**Community participation:** the project depends on wide support from community, religious and political leaders. Chiefs have often provided land where group income-generating projects can take place, while a number of churches have sponsored literacy classes.

**Investment in the training of facilitators:** most facilitators are young people, whose commitment has been the driving force of OpUp projects. They have absorbed the training and gone beyond it to bring about social change, despite receiving little remuneration in return.

**Relevance:** adult basic education programmes should take account of learners' specific and changing needs. As demonstrated, livelihood and health training must be incorporated into literacy programmes, as literacy alone does not address these social challenges and needs. Furthermore, relevant programmes sustain learners' motivation to continue learning, while at the same time encouraging their families to obtain an education after having witnessed its benefits first-hand.

**Follow-up:** training and the provision of reading materials for home-based study are critical means of sustaining and reinforcing the skills that learners have acquired. They also stimulate family-based, intergenerational learning.

### SUSTAINABILITY

The integration of livelihood and HIV/AIDS projects into literacy skills training programme is an innovative method that attracts learners and motivates them to continue participating in the programme. Moreover, high levels of illiteracy and poverty in rural areas ensure that the programme will continue to attract potential beneficiaries. In order to promote lifelong learning still further, OpUp publishes and disseminates up-to-date learning materials in South Africa's major languages. It also supports other community-based literacy groups in KwaZulu-Natal and in South Africa as a whole by training literacy facilitators and providing low-cost teaching and learning materials. However, without adequate funding, it will be difficult to continue to expand the programme.

### SOURCES

- Media Club South Africa: UNESCO lauds SA literacy project
- ProLiteracy Partner Wins UNESCO Prize for Literacy
- UNESCO: Operation Upgrade – Winner of the UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy 2008
- UNESCO: Hope for a forgotten land

### CONTACT

Ms Pat Dean  
Operation Upgrade of South Africa  
P.O. Box 371 Hyper by the Sea 4053  
South Africa  
E-mail:pat@operationupgrade.org.za

## UGANDA

# Non-Formal Education and Livelihood Skills Training Programme (NFELSTP)

### Implementing Organization

Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL)

### Language of Instruction

English and local languages

### Funding

UNESCO

### Programme Partners

Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Makerere University (Department of Social Work and Social Administration), AYIVU Rural Participatory Development (ARUPIDE).

### Date of Inception

2004–05

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The provision of educational opportunities to all citizens is central to Uganda's developmental poverty alleviation, social empowerment and transformation strategies. Various educational programmes and policies including the Universal Primary Education (UPE, 1997), the Universal Secondary Education (USE, 2007) and the Functional Adult Literacy Programme (FALP, a component of the national Poverty Eradication Action Plan – PEAP) have been instituted in recent years. Although beset by severe challenges such as the lack of resources and sustained political will, these programmes have had some positive educational impact. For instance, as a result of the UPE which provided free and compulsory primary education, the national primary school enrolment rate rose dramatically from 2.5 million in 1997 to 7.2 million in 2000. By 2005, the net intake rate (NIR) in primary education had risen to 66%. However, these programmes have not been accessible to all, especially

to children and youth living in remote and marginalised communities.

According to a recent study, the Functional Adult Literacy Programme (FALP) which endeavoured to promote youth and adult functional literacy, was only accessible to about 5% of the potential beneficiaries while only about 37.4% of children who completed primary school under the UPE programme were able to access secondary education. Furthermore, the secondary school system hardly provides learners with adequate vocational skills training opportunities. Essentially therefore, most youth – particularly those living in marginalised rural and urban-slum communities – are forced either to drop-out-of or to graduate from the school system lacking the practical skills necessary for securing viable employment and livelihoods. This has made the youth more vulnerable to exploitative labour practices and to engaging in risky antisocial behaviour including drug abuse and prostitution which expose them to HIV/AIDS infection. In light of this and in an effort to create viable learning and livelihood opportunities for vulnerable youth, the Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL) – an NGO founded in 1993 – initiated the Non-Formal Education and Livelihood Skills Training Programme (NFELSTP) in 2004 with financial and technical support from UNESCO.

## THE NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AND LIVELIHOOD SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMME (NFELSTP)

As noted above, the NFELSTP targets out-of-school and socioeconomically vulnerable youth (such as orphans, street youth, sex workers, domestic workers) from marginalised rural and urban-slum communities. Since its

inception in 2004, the programme has been implemented in Kampala and Arua districts (urban and rural respectively).

In order to empower vulnerable and marginalised youth, UYDEL provides them with vocational and livelihood training in different skills or trades including hairdressing, tailoring, motor mechanics, carpentry, electronics, welding, and cookery.

In addition, UYDEL also provides programme participants with life skills training with particular focus on health issues including HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, nutrition, child-rearing, peer-counselling, drug and alcohol (substance) abuse. Essentially therefore, the NFELSTP is an integrated vocational/livelihood and life skills training programme which primarily endeavours to empower socioeconomically marginalised and vulnerable youth and, by extension, their equally disadvantaged families and communities.

## Aims and objectives

- To equip vulnerable youth from marginalised communities with entrepreneurial and related functional literacy skills
- To create sustainable learning opportunities that nurture youth empowerment and socioeconomic inclusion
- To provide out-of-school youth from marginalised communities with marketable livelihood/vocational skills in order to enhance their employment (formal and/or informal) opportunities
- To empower youth to establish viable income generating projects (poverty alleviation)
- To break the cycle of youth marginalisation and vulnerability that undermines individual, community and national development prospects

- To raise awareness of and combat the spread of HIV/AIDS

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODS

### Institutional cooperation

Professionals, including academics and development specialists, play a critical role in the development and implementation of UYDEL's programmes. Similarly, during the development of the NFELSTP, UYDEL worked closely with professionals from Makerere University, UNESCO, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD) and various NGOs and CBOs. Noteworthy, professionals played a central role in the development of the project curriculum, teaching-learning materials and implementation strategies as well as in monitoring and evaluating the entire project. This cooperation helped to strengthen the capacity of UYDEL in the implementation of programme. Apart from professionals, 'ordinary' community members and activists were also actively consulted and involved in the identification of learners, artisans and implementation of the programme.

### Recruitment of facilitators and local artisans

UYDEL has recruited two professional social workers who act as the key programme facilitators. In particular, the facilitators are responsible for community mobilisation, coordinating and monitoring programme activities, implementing public awareness campaigns and identifying and placing learners with local artisans who are skilled practitioners in selected vocational trades. Local youth, their guardians and community-based parents' support groups also participate in identifying suitable artisans near their homes. These artisans are visited by the social workers to assess their willingness and capacity to train the youth. Based on the social workers' assessments and recommendations, UYDEL then signs a memorandum of understanding with the artisans, specifying issues such as training,

fees, period, and each party's expectations. Recruited artisans are provided with basic programme orientation training and, afterwards, learners are placed with the artisans for a period of three to five months for on-site practical skills training in a field or trade of their choice. Apart from providing vocational skills training to the youth, the artisans are also entrusted with the responsibility of providing life skills training (mentorship) and it is for this reason that UYDEL often selects artisans of high moral standing, highly regarded by their communities.

### Recruitment of earners

The identification, assessment and recruitment of vulnerable youth into the programme is done in different ways and by various stakeholders, including the youth themselves referring their peers to the programme, and community-based parents' support groups, community leaders, artisans and activists identifying affected and vulnerable youth. Additionally, programme facilitators (social workers) also undertake regular visits and hold discussions with youth from marginalised rural and urban-slum communities to enlighten them about UYDEL's non-formal education programmes. During such visits, the social workers also ascertain the identified youth's levels of socio-economic vulnerability, education and interest in order to screen them for appropriate vocational skills training placement. The pre-enrolment assessment, counselling and mentoring of potential learners is intended to ensure that only the most disadvantaged and thus deserving youth are enrolled into the programme as well as helping the youth to make an informed choice with regards to their potential vocational training.

### Teaching-learning approaches and methods

In order to effectively equip learners with sustainable practical vocational skills, the training of learners under the NFELSTP is primarily through the use of participatory methods (i.e. action-based). To this end, all learners are placed under the mentorship of master artisans and as such, training

is characterised by three major approaches: 'learning by doing, learning by producing and learning by earning'. Learning by producing and earning is central to the training of the youth because most of them have been exposed to earning money at an early age having lived (and continuing to live) in dire conditions, including being homeless or heading households. This also explains most youth's preference for training in trades that take a short period to complete. Additionally, participatory teaching-learning methods are also essential because most artisans and learners do not have formal education beyond primary level.

However, although the training of youth by artisans is largely informal, UYDEL and/or its partners often provide formal instruction to participants. Formal instruction – including seminars, group discussions/debates, story-telling and lectures – is primarily employed to facilitate the integration of health education into the programme. To this end, a number of easy-to-read learning materials such as booklets, pamphlets and posters have been produced to enable facilitators to effectively conduct health education classes. Some of the reading materials used include:

- Feed the Children – Uganda: an HIV/AIDS training manual for young people which was designed for community leaders, health workers and social workers to help them educate young people on HIV/AIDS related issues
- Adolescent sexual reproductive health training curriculum for young people (produced by the Ministry of Health, UNFPA and WHO)
- Peer educators training curriculum (Pathfinder – Uganda): This curriculum identifies activities, which can be undertaken by peers in order to orient them on their roles as they promote adolescent reproductive health
- Peer-to-Peer Drug Abuse Prevention Handbook (UYDEL).

### Assessment of learners

The assessment of learners and evaluation of learning/training outcomes is conducted on an ongoing basis by programme facilitators or social workers, UYDEL field supervisors and

master artisans. The social worker and UYDEL field supervisors conduct regular visits to the master artisans' work places in order to assess the training progress and any challenges being encountered, as well as to ascertain the artisan's capacity to train the youth. The social worker and UYDEL field supervisors also use the field visits to identify behavioural changes in the youths and to provide them with ongoing psychosocial counselling, support and guidance. Furthermore, the master artisans also regularly evaluate the youths' overall behaviour, training performance and progress and present reports to UYDEL.

## IMPACT

The NFELSTP has made a significant impact on marginalised youths' vocational skills competencies, livelihoods and psychosocial behaviour as well as on their communities' development and general living standards. The programme has thus become one of the major instruments of fostering individual and collective (social) empowerment and transformation. More specifically, an evaluation report by UNESCO identified the following key contributions of the programme on youth and societal development and well-being:

Employment generation, poverty alleviation and behavioural change: a majority of the youth who completed training in various vocational trades are now gainfully employed. This has not only enabled them to be self-reliant but has also improved their quality (standard) of life. One of the programme beneficiaries testified thus: 'I was picked by UYDEL staff when I was so poor to the extent that poverty could be seen from my face. But now I can see with a smile. I am so happy because I am self-supporting and useful to my family members'. The youths' ability to support themselves as well as to contribute to their families' subsistence has inevitably raised their living standards, imbued them with a sense of self-worth, positive attitudes and future perspectives and improved their social standing. Furthermore, the integration of practical skills training with health education, psychosocial counselling and guidance has also improved the

youths' self-esteem and confidence. This has enabled the youths to transform their lifestyles and thus prevented them from (re-) engaging in risky antisocial behaviour as one graduate attested: 'I left commercial sex [work after training in tailoring] and life is fantastic now. I get orders from many customers and earn about 150,000 shillings a month'. An artisan trainer gave a similar testimony: 'The children we received were rebellious, reporting late, and could give us hard time when training them; but now they have changed greatly. We even trust them with money and they keep it'.

Youth and community empowerment: the programme has equipped the youth with practical life and vocational (marketable) skills and as a result, they are now less vulnerable to manipulation and exploitation by employers as they are now better able to negotiate their employment conditions including levels of remuneration. Furthermore, it has also enabled youth to establish their own income generating enterprises, thereby generating more employment opportunities for other youth in their communities. In addition, public awareness about HIV/AIDs has led to discernible changes in the youths' sexual behaviour.

Social transformation and cohesion: the use of local artisans as youth trainers and social mentors (i.e. in the rehabilitation of vulnerable children) has helped to foster social cohesion. In addition, the programme has also inculcated the youth with a sense of social or civic responsibility which has, potentially, fostered family and cohesion as well as prevented some youth from engaging in anti-social behaviour including violent crime.

The programme has also boasted the business activities of master artisans who can now employ more youth and provide better services to their communities.

## CHALLENGES

Although the programme has had a positive impact in the lives of marginalised and vulnerable youth and their communities, it has also encountered major challenges. The

UNESCO evaluation report cited above revealed the following key challenges:

Lack of resources: programme funding from UNESCO has been limited. For example, the grant from UNESCO did not cover the costs for the purchase of training tools, clothing and protective gear and transport to training centres. This has had a negative impact on youths' ability to attend classes as most of them are very poor and cannot afford these costs on their own. There is also a lack of resources to support graduates to start their own income generating activities.

Some local artisans that are engaged by the programme have limited equipment/tools. This has had a negative impact on their ability to effectively train the youth and has also shifted the burden to UYDEL by way meeting extra costs of buying tools for the youth to train with.

Time limitations: the trainees are supposed to complete the skills training programme in (on average) three months. This period is too short to enable trainees to effectively acquire practical skills especially in view of the fact that some of them lack the basic and necessary literacy skills.

Some of the trades such as carpentry and motor vehicle mechanics have seasonal customers. This affects the learning process since the trainees learn as they earn. Eventually it creates redundancy with the youth having to wait for a new customer to place an order before receiving any form of training.

Some trainees are demotivated by the fact that some artisans do not pay them despite the contributions they make to the growth of their businesses. This has led to perceptions that the artisans are motivated by making profit rather than assisting the youth to improve their lives.

Artisans have also raised concerns that some youth who dropped out of school or never attended school tend to have difficulties in grasping the basic practical concepts necessary for skills acquisition. Such trainees tend to spend more time acquiring

a skill, which inevitably increases programme costs.

Regular counselling is essential in fostering successful youth behavioural change.

### LESSONS LEARNED

A number of lessons have been learnt during the course of the project implementation. These include:

■ **Community mobilisation** and involvement of key community leaders, parents and the youth themselves is central to the success and sustainability of non-formal educational programmes. Most importantly, active community participation is essential in identifying the most vulnerable and deserving youth from the communities. Professional networking and collaboration: the involvement of professionals from diverse fields is critical for the success of integrated youth-centric educational programmes

■ **Integrated programming:** because marginalised youth have multiple socioeconomic problems, it is imperative to institute holistic and integrated learning which addresses this. For example, literacy and business skills are central to enabling trainees to establish their own enterprises. Such an integrated approach is also more attractive to the youth and their parents.

■ **Cost effectiveness:** the use of local master artisans instead of formal vocational institutions is a more cost effective (cheaper) approach of implementing non-formal youth educational programmes. It not only helps to cater for more vulnerable youth but also serves to expose trainees to specific realistic work conditions and the challenges they are likely to meet. This enables them to learn how to effectively deal with such challenges. The trainees earn a small income which helps to improve their living standards and motivates them to continue participating in the programme. Furthermore, the local artisans understand the situations these youth are in and are better able to provide appropriate mentorship.

■ **Regular monitoring:** a social worker needs to make regular visits and hold meetings with local artisans to monitor the progress of training. This also helps to monitor problems during the training and to find solutions.

### SOURCES

■ UNESCO Evaluation Report (2006) Non-Formal Education and Livelihood Skills for Marginalised Street and Slum Youth in Uganda.

### CONTACT

Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL)  
Sir Apollo Kaggwa Road,  
BIFRO Hse  
P.O. Box 12659, Kampala, Uganda,  
Tel: 041-530353  
Email: [uydel@utlonline.co.ug](mailto:uydel@utlonline.co.ug)

## EGYPT

# Learning and Earning in Cairo's Garbage City

### Implementing organization

Spirit of Youth Association (SOY)

### Language of instruction

Arabic

### Date of inception

December 2001

### Programme partners

CID consulting, Procter and Gamble, the Bill Gates Foundation, the Hands on the Nile Foundation and the African Star Foundation

### Funding

Procter and Gamble and Bill Gates Foundation (since 2010). Additional funding is generated by selling the shredded plastic which results from the recycling programme.

### Annual programme costs

EGP 220,000 (equivalent to USD 28.824)

## COUNTRY CONTEXT

Since 2012, Egypt has made enormous progress in developing an educational system for all, as part of its implementation of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals. As a result, 93.3 per cent of young boys and girls are now enrolled in school education, while the gap between boys' and girls' enrolment was reduced. While the number of formally educated Egyptians increases, the core problem of the country's education system remains its poor quality. The majority of students leave primary school without being able to read fluently, while poor reading and writing skills contribute to a 30 per cent unemployment rate among young people. Children who never enrol in school education are usually prevented by socio-economic burdens such as poverty or by geographical factors, which may include living in areas so remote as to prevent them

from being reached by the education system.

Among the largest groups currently absent from formal education are the garbage-collecting communities that live on the outskirts of Cairo. Cairo's six Zabaleen (Arabic for 'garbage people') communities survive through collecting trash and recycling it. Marginalized from society, facing poverty and low health standards, the Zabaleen's work is, nevertheless, valued by society, as they recycle between 80% and 85% of the trash the mega city produces. The Zabaleen waste collection system has even received international recognition and World Bank support as it is considered highly efficient. However, in 2000, Cairo's city municipality introduced a centralized trash recycling system, placing household waste collection in the hands of multinational companies, a move which threatened the Zabaleen communities' income and socio-economic sustainability. The municipality has offered the community no compensation for this change, despite the fact that the community relies on the recycling business, particularly as it is largely isolated from state schooling.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Founded in 2004, the Spirit of Youth Association (SOY) is an Egyptian non-governmental organization located in Manshiyet Nasser, one of the largest Zabaleen community districts in Cairo. Set up by members of the community, the NGO aims to empower young community members through educational projects. SOY's core project is the Recycling School for Boys, which aims to enhance the diffusion of practical knowledge both to improve qualifications levels and to empower the community in the recycling business. The school is located in Mokattam, the largest village within Cairo's garbage city,

and promotes cooperation rather than competition between the Zabaleen recycling system and the multinational companies.

The school was founded by community consultancy firm, Community and Institutional Development, and UNESCO Cairo Office in response to the socio-economic change felt by the community when the multinationals' trash recycling systems were introduced. It now forms part of the Spirit of Youth Association. The school's broader goal is to reduce poverty and marginalization, and improve health standards within the Zabaleen community. These objectives are met through literacy programmes, which are mainly delivered in the specific work-oriented practical context familiar to the learners. Boys learn about their rights as well as their duties towards people and their environment. In the long term, the aim is to build a responsible younger generation able to empower itself. By 2015, 130 boys aged between nine and seventeen had graduated from the school. Fifty of them enrolled in middle school afterwards and twenty in high school. Four students received high school certificates. Among their parents, 129 obtained the literacy certificate. In addition to these success stories, the school has also been the role model for another project, in Helwan region, which received national attention in the media.

## Aims and Objectives

The programme aims:

- To offer programmes, projects, and activities focused on the environmental and educational aspects of maintaining a business and increasing income.
- To improve the environment of impoverished communities by promoting the concept and practice of

waste segregation at source in local neighbourhoods of Greater Cairo.

- To further enhance the projects and expertise of the SOY association beyond the community of garbage collectors in Manshiyet Nasser.
- To further develop the association into a learning organization that continuously improves and builds its institutional capacities as well as its human resources.
- To build the capacity of the Zabaleen by advocating for their integration into the formal waste management sector in Egypt.
- To provide awareness and primary health care services to children, youth and women in marginalized communities, assisting them to obtain access to free government medical services.
- To offer children and young people working in particularly hazardous conditions alternative and safe work environments related to their skills and experience.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

The programme is designed in a flexible way to adapt to the special circumstances in which young boys in Zabaleen communities find themselves. Courses are offered on a variable schedule. Each student has to be present for a minimum number of hours to complete each programme, and attends whenever time allows. The learners are categorized into three groups according to their capacity to read and write, ranging from those who are not able to recognize letters to those who are able to read but with difficulty. There is no standard duration for the classes, which are, instead, adapted to the learner's progress and ability to attend classes. The programmes take place in the school and students have access to a computer lab and a plastic cutting machine. The school curriculum is built around the recycling of plastic shampoo bottles manufactured by Proctor and Gamble and other multinationals. The students collect empty bottles, count them and fill out forms to indicate how many they have retrieved. The multinationals, which want to end the fraudulent practice of refilling their discarded bottles with soap and water and reselling them, pay students for each bottle recorded.

The students convert the bottles into plastic powder which is then sold to local recycling companies. The school curriculum combines this activity with basic education, computer literacy, practical work experience and the study of environmental protection and workplace safety. The literacy classes are taught in the main hall in small groups of two or three learners

Learners enrol at the school for two to five years and graduate with the national literacy certificate, which enables them to apply for further schooling in middle school.

## Programme Content and Teaching Material

The learning process is designed around real situations familiar to the boys from their day-to-day lives. The approach assumes that literacy taught through a vivid process of initiating and sustaining creates self-empowerment through the experience of free decision-making and freedom of action. Teaching basic literacy in a context that adapts to the environment of the boys, the programme combines knowledge in maths, science, music, painting, personal and environmental hygiene, recycling, the use of office software and Google maps. The programme also covers computer skills, the principles of project management, book keeping and simple accounting, and art and drama. The literacy classes use vocabulary known to the learners through their work as recyclers. A typical class is built around the recycling of shampoo bottles. A mathematics class might include safety measurements and calculations as to what might be earned given the number, size and price of the bottles. After students collect the shampoo bottles, they learn how to count them and how to read the brand name. They use their maths and literacy skills to fill out forms indicating how many bottles they retrieved. The forms are then given to the multinationals which pay each learner for bottles they collected. The courses thus stress technical learning through active work experience. There is an arts element too. The drama curriculum included a play about the life and history of the garbage collectors in Cairo that is performed to educate

people about the challenges facing the garbage collectors in Egypt.

The methodology used is unique, working with the sound of a letter rather than its name. After completing a basic level of reading and writing, the learners work with information and communication technologies in order to learn how to integrate Google in their daily work and planning. For example, most of our students work with their parents in collecting the garbage from Cairo's neighborhoods and streets. To support that work, they are taught how to use Google maps to identify the area in which they are supposed to work, the name of the streets and the best route to take.

Specialists in education develop a curriculum tailored to the life of the community and continuously add new elements. The material was developed by Dr Laila Iskandar with support from the teachers and is based on the Montessori approach to maths and science. Further materials used in the programme include books and notebooks, computers, musical instruments and art material, the plastic cutting machine and the safety materials.

## Recruitment and Training of Facilitators

The facilitators, who receive modest salaries, work flexible hours and are drawn from within the community. Given the location of the school in the middle of the garbage collectors' neighbourhood and the low wages, people tend not to come from outside the area.

The teachers are recruited through public advertisement, mainly targeting NGOs and the main church, and through the efforts of school staff.

Teachers at the school must have a minimum of high school education but the will to learn and a passionate approach to teaching are much more important. Teachers in this setting also need to bring a high degree of flexibility to their work. They undergo on-the-job training at the beginning of the programme and continue their development through with weekly support and monthly training

sessions, as well as attending various specialized courses when available.

Currently, the programme employs eight teachers. The number of working staff depends on the number of hours they do. A minimum of two teachers per shift is needed which means four teachers must be available to work each day. Since the school is open every day, a minimum of six tutors is needed.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

The literacy exams offer one form of evaluation. The school director also gives feedback to the teachers. An external consultant has evaluated the project and the learners themselves continuously give informal feedback to the teachers.

### IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

The success of the school is best reflected in the stories of its graduates. At 26, Moussa Nazmy is the first in his family to read and write: 'After graduating from the recycling school I decided to continue learning through formal schooling. Now I am about to take my final secondary school exams, because I want to go to university.'

Adham Al Sharkawy first came to school when he was 12 years old and illiterate. He gained his literacy certificate and then had home schooling for middle school. He is now about to finish high school. He achieved numerous qualifications in computing and has worked as a trainer in the school in the health and recycling programmes. He was one of the main characters in the film *Garbage Dreams*, for which he went to the United States of America, spending two years there during which he had intensive English courses. After returning from the US, he went to England to attend a forum on recycling. He now runs a start-up for collecting and recycling garbage with a group of friends.

Nabil William first attended school when he was 11 years old. He too was illiterate. He gained his literacy certificate and received home schooling afterwards to equip him

for middle school and technical high school. After attending a forum on recycling in England, he now is a trainer of drama and art in the school and volunteers in the animation team for the programme's summer camps. With a group of friends, he has launched a start-up for collecting and recycling garbage.

Roumani Magdi was illiterate when he first attended school aged ten. After gaining his literacy certificate, he received home schooling for middle school and technical high school, including numerous computer certificates. He worked as a computer trainer at the school for two years and then started his own business in paper. He managed to buy a pick-up to enlarge his business.

### Challenges

The school's work faces various challenges due to the environment in which it was created. The numerous duties and challenging workload of young people in this community mean that flexibility is needed in school schedules, teaching hours and methods. The school adapts its hours and methods according to the need and level of each learner. It also tries continuously to integrate the day-to-day duties of the learners into the programme and its schedule, as much as it does their vocabulary. At the same time, efforts are made to make older learners co-teachers. Another challenge is to support learners after graduation to ensure they utilize the skills they have gained through the school in further empowering themselves.

Other challenges include funding, particularly securing it in the longer term, and the need to offer further support to students in setting up their own projects. One way of supporting students in creating their own projects would be by teaching an entrepreneurship curriculum.

Part of the programme's funds could be used to create an income-generating project for the NGO, which could, in turn, contribute to its sustainability.

### SUSTAINABILITY

The programme has been running since 2001 with initial co-funding from UNESCO. Today, however, the only income to the project is the price of the cut plastic sold to the market. Consequently, the NGO relies on Proctor and Gamble and Star Foundation support to ensure the project is sustained into the future.

### CONTACT

Dalia Wahba  
Managing Partner  
17 El Maraashly Street, 7th Floor,  
Suite 16, Zamalek,  
Cairo, Egypt  
Tel: +20 27364479  
Email: [dalia@cid.com.eg](mailto:dalia@cid.com.eg)

## MOROCCO

# Functional Literacy Programme of Women of the Argan Cooperative through Amazigh (Berber) Language DVDs

### Implementing Organization

Association Ibn Albaytar  
(national NGO)

### Language of Instruction

Arabic, Berber (Amazigh)

### Funding

International NGOs and foreign donors

### Programme Partners

National Centre of Development and Literacy (Centre National de Développement et d'Alphabétisation – CNDA), Nutrition Act and the international cooperation of Monaco

### Annual Programme Costs

€60 000 (USD 80 000 – first year including DVD production costs), €25 000 (USD 34 000 – second year)

### Cost per Learner: €104 (USD 140)

### Date of Inception

December 2008

## COUNTRY CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Morocco is an emerging country ranking 130 out of 187 in the 2013 Human Development Report (UNDP, 2013). Agriculture makes up 15% of the GDP (World Bank, 2013) with 40% of the active labour force employed in its activity in 2010 (UNDP, 2011).

The Argan oil trade is unique to the country, its activity mainly being carried out by women in rural areas. While the oil is used in cooking, it is also renowned in the cosmetics industry and known for its medicinal virtues. Situated in central and southern Morocco, it serves as a buffer against desertification from the Sahara desert in the south. Due

to the threat of excessive human exploitation, the Argan tree became not only the focus for conservation, but also for socio-economic development and research. In 1998, through the UNESCO Man and Biosphere programme (MAB), the Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve was designated, its core area comprising the Souss-Masaa National Park. A secondary aim of this programme besides environmental protection, is also to promote and demonstrate a balanced relationship between people and nature.

With a population of over 32 million, literacy rates in Morocco stand at an average of 56%, representing over 10 million people lacking basic literacy skills. With literacy programmes frequently being carried out in urban areas, opportunities for women in poor rural areas to acquire these skills are relatively few and far between.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The association Ibn Al Baytar (AIB) was created in 1999 and is registered as a national NGO in Morocco. It has 30 members and an Administration Council made up of 9 people. The main aim of the association is to bring together social and economic progress with the preservation of the environment. Its programmes focus on the autonomy of women in rural areas, encouraging the protection of the environment and medicinal plants. Literacy classes are coordinated with income-generating activities and provided for women working in one of the Argan women's cooperatives.

The association was among the first to set up cooperatives in the Argan sector in Morocco, starting with

starting with Amal cooperative in 1996 employing 16 divorced or widowed women. Many of these women had never acquired literacy skills and so from 2003 the association also started to include literacy training as part of their programmes. This came to benefit over 3000 women in the Argan trade. A diagnostic study in 2006 brought to light that the need to consolidate literacy skills was being overlooked, also the fact that many of the women spoke Berber, some of whom could only speak very little Arabic. This led to the implementation in December 2008 of a new literacy programme designed to address these needs in Amazigh, a Berber language spoken by the women participating in it.

The programme is implemented in five provinces of the region Souss Massa Draa in central Morocco. Each year 240 women and girls from rural areas participate in the programme with a total of over 480 rural women benefiting from it since its inception. The programme's focus on rural women sets it out from other organizations whose main field of action is in urban areas. It is also the first literacy programme in Morocco to produce and use audio-visual material in the Amazigh language.

## Aims and Objectives

The literacy programme for groups of women in the Argan cooperative aims at:

- Making the cooperative's women aware of the importance of environmental protection and preservation
- Making the cooperative's women aware of the importance of the Argan Biosphere and what is at stake in the preservation of the Argan forest

- Making the cooperative's women aware of the primary importance of cooperative and solidarity organisation
- Endowing the cooperative's women with knowledge of legislation and cooperative management
- Endowing the cooperative's women with skills in the areas of quality norms/standards and traceability procedures in Argan oil production
- Increasing women's awareness of the obstacles/constraints in Argan sales and the value of promoting fair trade
- Endowing the cooperative women's knowledge of new family laws, especially those concerning the status of divorced women and the basic principles of family management.

The simplification of audio-visual pedagogical tools in the Amazigh language for the women of the Argan cooperative looks at:

- Increasing women's awareness of the importance of the cooperative as an economic structure for solidarity
- Initiating women into cooperative legislation
- Accompanying cooperative women in the implementation of good cooperative governance
- Mobilizing women to adhere to efforts made to establish, respect, and improve quality standards and to implement a traceability system within the cooperatives
- Reinforcing the cooperatives on an institutional level
- Increasing women's awareness of the Argan Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) and the importance of fair trade.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Teaching – Learning Approaches and Methodologies

Classes are held during six months of each year with an average of 25 learners per group.

At the beginning of each session a review is made of the previous session, helping participants to consolidate what they have already learned and retain the key elements. It is also used



to evaluate what they know and what they have acquired.

Participative methods are principally used, ensuring full involvement of each learner. Brainstorming is one such technique, used to create a debate between the cooperative women based on their knowledge and conceptions and also to ascertain to what level they master the subject under question. Women are able to freely share their own opinions and points of view. The brainstorming is followed by the use of audio-visual material on the same theme. As this material is in the mother-tongue of the participants they are able to follow it closely and also understand it. The content projected during the showing is then used to rectify, where necessary, some of the women's ideas or viewpoints expressed during the preliminary discussion while continuing to promote free expression.

Group work is then used to consolidate and put into action what has been discussed and covered. It is also a means for the facilitator to discern the level to which each participant has mastered the subject under discussion.

### Programme content (curriculum)

The association Ibn Al Baytar (AIB) has been working in the field of adult literacy since 2003 for the benefit of the Argan oil cooperatives. This experience has greatly contributed to the curriculum in place for this programme. The principal manual used helps learners to acquire and maintain literacy skills combined with improving their management skills in the Argan trade. A key difference between this programme and former ones is the language of instruction, classes being held and manuals being used are no longer in Arabic but in Amazigh, the main language spoken by participants.

Principal themes covered in the curriculum include the:

- Protection of the environment
- Arganeraie Biosphere Reserve
- Cooperative: definition and membership (part 1)
- Cooperative: principals, rights and obligations (part 2)
- General Assembly of the Cooperative
- Accountancy for the Cooperative
- Traditional and mechanical oil extraction methods
- Quality and traceability
- Marketing and PGI (Protected Geographical Indications) of Argan oil
- Family law



Audio-visual material is a key feature of the programme. An expert in pedagogy was recruited to specifically design and plan the contents of these materials and sessions. The artistic development and final production of the material was entrusted to and carried out by a company specialising in artistic productions. A total of 12 pedagogical films were created to be used in the programme.

### Recruitment and Training of Facilitators

All facilitators follow a programme to be trained as facilitators. They are given a pedagogical kit comprising of a facilitators guide in Arabic and a DVD in Amazigh. They follow a technical outline for each session. Facilitators are paid DH2800 per month (USD 340) and oversee two groups of 50-60 learners. They all have experience in the field of adult literacy and undergo three specific training sessions: literacy teaching, cooperative legislation and health and legal education. Extended training also includes andragogy, facilitation and communication techniques, evaluation methods, use of audio-visual supports, among other things.

### Enrolment of Learners

The main target groups are women and girls. Women working in the women's cooperatives who wish to follow the programme offered by the association Ibn Al Baytar can be enrolled. Each year 240 participants benefit from the programme.

### Assessment of learning outcomes

During sessions, the facilitator uses different exercises to assess the participants' acquisition and assimilation of the subjects covered. At the end of each module participants are given a test to evaluate their knowledge and what they have acquired. These tests include different formats such as true or false questions, multiple choice, connecting information and carrying out tasks.

Following the evaluation, the facilitator runs reinforcement sessions, helping participants to extend and refine their newly acquired skills and knowledge. These evaluations also serve to fine-tune the curriculum and methodologies as recurrent deficits in the programme may be brought to light, they can also be addressed, adjusted and rectified as appropriate.

At the end of each year, all participants take an examination as part of

a final evaluation. They receive a final grade, but no certificates are issued.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Pedagogical supervisors visit the different training units once a month to insure the pedagogical follow-up, aid the facilitators and help solve any problems which have come up during literacy classes. During each visit, the supervisor will check the pedagogical documentation including technical documents, participants lists, timetables, attendance rosters, monthly reports and agendas. The supervisor then submits a report to the association Ibn Al Baytar at the end of each visit.

Further evaluations are made by external consultants or doctoral students studying impact at this level.

### PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

#### Impact and achievements

Three thousand women have participated in the literacy programme in Arabic since its inception in 2003.

In 2009 and 2010, over 480 women benefited from the literacy programme with the DVD in the

Amazigh language and attendance rates have increased since its outset. Success rates for the programme in Amazigh are at 84% compared to previous rates of below 50% for the programme in Arabic.

Various benefits have also been recorded relating to improved quality and traceability in Argan oil production and more transparency in the cooperatives. Women are demonstrating greater initiative in contacting or consulting administration in the cooperative sector. They have also become more aware of the need to protect the environment and the Argan trade.

As the programme is being implemented in key areas of the Souss Massa Drâa region, notably the provinces of Agadir Idaoutanane, Chtouka Ait Baha, Taroudant and Tiznit, more and more requests are being received to extend the programme further. It is now being used as a model in other women's cooperatives in other sectors besides Argan.

One learners' manual has been produced and a second is under way. In addition there is an instructor's manual on literacy with a second focusing on skills training for instructors.

### Challenges and lessons learned

The implementation and day-to-day running of the programme has met with its own set of challenges. The buildings housing the literacy centres are in a precarious state, lacking adequate tables and chairs, missing windows and with roofs in disrepair. Participants do not have the necessary equipment, such as televisions and DVD players, to enable them to view audio-visual material at home. Many participants have expressed a need for the courses to be longer than six months, finding this length too short to fully assimilate the whole programme.

The programme has also learned from and overcame various challenges. The social climate and different political events, such as the electoral campaign, have had an impact on the programme, most often disturbing the regularity of classes. One year,



the annual harvest had been good and harvesting started as early as April in certain zones. As a result, many women were pushed to stop their classes to help their families with the harvest and associated activities. To counteract this, timetables were modified and arrangements were made for participants to be able to catch up with what they had missed.

Some cooperatives invest heavily in this programme while others, lacking their own means, are constrained to wait for financial aid from other NGOs or foreign donors.

### SUSTAINABILITY

The long term sustainability of the programme depends on a continued demand for literacy training by groups of women and women's cooperatives as well as the continued investment of financial partners. There are now 180 cooperatives for Argan, which represent 4500 women, each a potential beneficiary of the programme. The demand for literacy training is great, but needs the financial backing to be able to keep up with it.

In 2008 the Minister of Agriculture in Morocco launched the Projet Vert (Green Plan) to promote income-generating activities in other sectors and for other products than Argan and in

2010 it started to be implemented in the field. The experience and expertise gained in the Argan sector could be adapted and later used for these new activities. Requests are already being received to use the programme in cooperatives in other sectors.

### SOURCES

- UNDP (2013) Human Development Report 2013
- UENSCO (2013) Man and Biosphere programme
- UNESCO – MAB Biosphere Reserves Directory – Morocco Argénaire

### CONTACT DETAILS

Madame Zoubida Charrou  
President of the Association Ibn  
Albaytar  
22 rue Sebou,  
Appt 2  
Agdal RABAT  
Morocco  
Telephone: 212537.77.53.80  
Fax: 2125 37 71 32 79  
Mobile: 212 661372142  
Email: zcharrouf@yahoo.fr

## BANGLADESH

# Ganokendra Model of Community Learning Centres

**Implementing Organization**  
Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM)

**Language of Instruction**  
Bengali (Bangla)

**Programme Partners**  
Local Communities, UNESCO, the State of Bangladesh (through local administrative bodies, extension service departments), Bangladesh Open University, Concern Universal and NGOs working in the area.

**Date of Inception**  
1992

## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Over the past few decades, Bangladesh and various NGOs have instituted several educational programmes such as universal (compulsory and free) primary education and the establishment of village libraries and village study circles in an effort to provide its citizens with access to quality education and thus to promote national economic development, poverty alleviation and social empowerment and transformation. However, in spite of these concerted efforts, a majority of Bangladeshis, particularly those living in marginalised rural communities, and especially women, children and people living with disabilities, have little access to quality education and livelihood opportunities. As a result, poverty and illiteracy continue to be highly prevalent in the country. It is estimated that every year about 7 million children fail to attend school or drop out of school before completing primary education, thus about 60 million Bangladeshis are functionally illiterate. Overall, UNESCO estimates that the total adult and youth literacy rates were 47 per cent and 64 per cent, respectively, between 1995 and

2004. The continued prevalence of illiteracy in the country is due to a number of socio-economic factors including high levels of poverty and the general lack of development, all of which prevents many people from gaining access to basic education. Additionally, many neo-literates (i.e. primary school graduates) have relapsed into illiteracy due to a severe lack of institutionalised post-primary educational programmes. In light of this, and recognising that illiteracy is both the cause and consequence of poverty and under-development, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) – a non-governmental organisation (NGO) founded in 1958 to promote poverty alleviation and socio-economic empowerment among the poor – initiated the Ganokendra (translates from Bangla to "people's centres") Programme in 1992 with support from UNESCO.

## THE GANOKENDRA PROGRAMME (GP)

The Ganokendra Programme (GP) is a non-formal, intergenerational and integrated educational programme which endeavours to create contextually appropriate, need-based and sustainable lifelong learning opportunities for out-of-school children, youths and adults living in marginalised rural and urban slum communities. Although the programme serves all community members, particular efforts are made to target women, not only because they are often marginalised from existing educational programmes but also because they are central to family and community development. As such, women currently constitute about 70% of the membership of more than 85,300 programme beneficiaries.

In order to cater for the diverse needs of the different groups of benefi-

ciaries, the GP provides participants with skills training opportunities in a variety of fields including:

- literacy (basic and functional literacy);
- livelihood skills training and support to establish income generation activities / projects (in, for example, handicraft production, carpentry and agriculture);
- health (e.g. HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, family nutrition, good sanitation practices, anti-drug and anti-tobacco awareness campaigns);
- environmental conservation and
- civic education (leadership training, human and gender rights awareness, human security, democratic governance, conflict management and resolution, child and women trafficking awareness and prevention).

## Aims and Objectives

The GP endeavours to:

- create sustainable and community-based Lifelong Learning opportunities for the poor majority in order to combat illiteracy;
- create learning opportunities for neo-literates to enable them to retain, sustain and improve their literacy skills;
- compliment government efforts in combating illiteracy in the country in line with UNESCO's six Education for All (EFA) Goals;
- combat rural poverty;
- promote community development, social empowerment and transformation;
- enable economic self-reliance among the poor majority and
- raise the living standards (quality of life) of poor people.

To achieve these multiple and integrated goals, the Dhaka Ahsania

Mission (DAM) has established about 2,470 multi-purpose Ganokendra or Community Learning Centres (CLCs) across the country since 1992. The CLCs have since become focal points for the provision of needs-based non-formal education (literacy and life skills training programmes) to out-of-school children, youths and adults in the country. The CLCs are also used as community libraries and are therefore stocked with a variety of easy-to-read materials for community members of all age-groups. In addition, the CLCs also provide facilities for public meetings and socio-cultural and economic activities which are necessary for cultural preservation and for promoting peaceful coexistence, community development and social empowerment.

### PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

**Organisational Arrangements**

From the outset, local communities or programme beneficiaries were actively consulted and involved in the development and implementation of the GP. Thus, apart from providing land, labour, construction materials and money needed for the establishment of Ganokendra or CLCs, DAM has also entrusted local communities (through their elected management committees) with the overall responsibility of managing the centres, initiating and managing centre-based learning activities, and recruiting and facilitating the provision of professional training to a centre manager (known as Community Worker) and programme tutors or facilitators. In addition, the CLC management committees and programme facilitators are also responsible for sourcing and producing the necessary learning materials such as booklets, posters, magazines, charts, newsletters and audio-visuals and for and stocking the centres with these. The local CLC management committees are supported in these endeavours by DAM, various development NGOs and local government bodies. Further funding for the CLCs is provided by DAM. The money generated through these processes is used, among other

things, to procure learning materials for the CLC, fund centre operational costs and most importantly, provide members with soft loans or credits. CLCs clustered in a geographical area are networked through a technical service centre known as a Community Resource Centre (CRC). CRCs also function as nodal institutions to facilitate establishing linkage of the Ganokendra with government and private sector service providing agencies.

### Recruitment and Training of Facilitators

Generally, the GP attracts community-based personnel (mostly women) with lower educational qualifications and professional teaching capacities. Known as Community Workers, these facilitators are recruited locally by DAM field offices in consultation with the Ganokendra management committees. They work mostly as para-volunteers; a nominal allowance is paid to them to recognise their contribution to the society. Accordingly and in order to ensure the effective implementation of the GP, DAM provides all programme facilitators and supervisors with professional training in non-formal education and management of CLCs. So far, DAM's training division has provided training to more than three thousand facilitators and two hundred supervisors. In particular, the Training of Trainers (ToT) programme trains facilitators and supervisors in:

- non-formal education teaching methods;
- community mobilisation and capacity building;
- management of CLCs;
- functional organisational networking;
- planning and implementation of community development programmes;
- development of locally-focused curriculum and learning materials and
- assessment or evaluation non-formal educational outcomes.

### Mobilisation of Participants

The participants of a Ganokendra come from various segments of population in the community where

it is located. Initially, the learners from literacy courses are enrolled for post-literacy courses and practice sessions in the Ganokendra. Gradually other members of the society such as farmers, artisans, day labourers, school children, teachers, local youths and community leaders join various programmes in the Ganokendra. Some of them visit the Ganokendra to read newspapers or to collect information for their needs.

### Training-Learning Methods and Approaches

The participants in the Ganokendra activities learn through practical work (for vocational skills training), self-reading, guided reading, socio-cultural activities and discussions. Literacy skills training support is provided by programme facilitators through centre-based consultations and discussions (CLCs are open for five days a week, two to three hours a day). In addition, learners are also allowed to borrow books for home-based study and facilitators often conduct home visits to assist families in their studies. The learners study in groups, and graded reading materials are supplied to suit the ability levels of the readers. Specialists working in various fields are also invited to share information with the participants through issue-based discussion sessions.

### PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

Typically, the Management Information System (MIS) unit of DAM's Planning and Monitoring Division monitors Ganokendra operations on a regular basis and against a set of indicators. Performance is also monitored through regular reports from the facilitators, supervisors and area coordinators. These reports are cross-examined by MIS personnel during their field visits. In addition, the central management team of DAM (programme officers, programme coordinator and the director) make inspection visits to assess the management, networking and learning support programmes

of CLCs. After field-level and central office analysis of the reports and the visit findings, the local centres receive feedback with regard to their activities.

### Impact

Since being instituted in 1992, the GP has made critical and positive contributions in promoting Lifelong Learning, combating illiteracy, developing communities, creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for marginalised members of society (poverty alleviation) and effecting social empowerment and transformation. Significantly, these positive contributions to societal well-being and development have largely been achieved through the use of local resources, capacity and knowledge systems.

The programme has led to a decrease in adult illiteracy rates while, at the same time, equipping many adults with vocational skills and supporting them to establish a variety of income-generating projects. These projects have progressively led to community development and thus improvements in the quality of life of rural people. Improvements in rural or poor people's living standards as well as their perceptions on the role and value of education in their lives have positively motivated many parents to support their children's education. As a result, the enrolment of children in rural schools has steadily increased. In addition, the GP has also provided marginalised communities with access to information and a forum to meet and discuss their local problems and developmental needs. Access to information has improved people's awareness of their civic rights and their health needs which, in turn, has resulted in positive social empowerment and transformation. It has also enabled formerly marginalised communities to actively participate in local decision-making processes. Furthermore, the GP has led to improvements in community cohesion, providing a forum for the peaceful discussion of solutions for community problems.

### Challenges

The following are key challenges that have been encountered to date:

- Developing a facility to suit diverse learning needs and securing the availability of a venue for a multi-purpose centre like the Ganokendra is often difficult. Usually the land for the Ganokendra is donated by a local philanthropist, and is often limited in size. With the expansion of the activities, it becomes imperative to develop more facilities, which demands more land and resources.
- In expanding, it becomes difficult for the facilitators to manage a diverse group of participants and an expanding range of activities, due to their limited capacity and other preoccupations. The absence of financial and professional development incentives for programme facilitators sometimes become a de-motivating factor for them.
- The activities of CLCs, particularly those in remote areas, are often undermined by lack of resources; support from local governmental bodies is not available in some cases, due to their own resource constraints.

### SUSTAINABILITY

As a direct product of the process of people mobilisation, and the creation of a people's platform at community level, GP is sustained through its established links with local service-providing agencies. The contribution from the community both for physical set-up development and programmatic expansion enables the Ganokendra to continue. DAM develops the management capacity of the Ganokendra committee members through training and exposure visits, so that they can continue operation of the centres once DAM support is phased out. By now more than 200 Ganokendas run self-sufficiently through mobilizing local resources; in some cases, DAM provided only technical support for further strengthening of their management capacity.

### LESSONS LEARNED

A key lesson that has emerged since the inception of the programme is

that community-based non-formal educational programmes are more effective and successful when they harness and are built on local resources, capacity and knowledge systems and when local communities are actively engaged and involved in the planning and management of learning activities. The success and sustainability of non-formal educational programmes is also closely dependent on their potential to address local challenges and fulfil people's basic needs as well as on effective capacity building.

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### CONTACT

The Executive Director  
Mr. M. Ehsanur Rahman  
Dhaka Ahsania Mission  
House No. 19, Road No 12  
Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1209  
Bangladesh  
Tel. (880-2) 8119521-22, 9123402,  
9123420  
Fax: (880-2) 8113010, 8118522  
Email: ehsan1155@gmail.com, ed@ahsaniamission.org

## CAMBODIA

# Supporting Maternal and Child Health Improvement and Building Literate Environment (SMILE)

### Implementing Organization

Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) and the Cambodian Women's Development Agency (CWDA)

### Language of Instruction

Khmer

### Programme Partners

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) and local authorities

### Date of Inception

2009

## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

During the Khmer Rouge regime in the 70s, Cambodia's education system was severely damaged. Schools were closed or demolished, and many of the educators died in forced labour camps or were killed by the Khmer Rouge. Reconstruction has been in place since the end of the regime but there is still a scarcity of schools and State schools are under-equipped. Very often, classes are conducted without textbooks for the students, and teachers are underpaid. These factors make it difficult for students to access schools and receive a quality education.

According to World Bank data, in the last decade in Cambodia, there was a sharp decrease in the number of children not attending primary school, (201,277 in 2000 to 72,886 in 2010) and a significant increase of the net intake rate in grade 1 (71 % in 2000 to 90% in 2010). Whilst these numbers are positive for Cambodian education, the number of students who reached the final grade in 2010 was only 54.4% and this number has not changed since 2000, 54.7%

displaying rather discouraging picture. In addition, literacy rates among adults in 2009 were 83% among men and 66% among women, lagging significantly behind the average of East Asia and Pacific region (97% among males, 91% female). There are some concerns for Cambodia's health conditions. According to UNICEF (2012), Cambodia's maternal mortality rate is the fourth lowest in East Asia and the Pacific, indicating the need for more support for improving maternal health.

### Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU)

In line with the principles of UNESCO, the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) has been working since 1971 for the promotion of mutual understanding and educational and cultural co-operation among peoples in Asia and the Pacific, by implementing various programmes in the fields of literacy, book development, and culture.

### Cambodian Women's Development Agency (CWDA)

Founded in May 1993, the Cambodian Women's Development Agency (CWDA) grew out of the Phnom Penh municipality. CWDA is a small non-profit, non-governmental organisation with no religious or political affiliation. CWDA works with women and children. It has strong links in the communities in which it operates. CWDA aims to promote self-sufficiency and self-reliance in Cambodian communities and to advance women's economic and social rights. It seeks to address the socio-economic and psychological problems resulting from Cambodia's

civil war and political instability by empowering women in both their productive and reproductive capacities through education, organisation, and self-development, access to resources, advocacy and cooperation.

### SMILE CAMBODIA PROJECT

The Supporting Maternal and Child Health Improving and Literate Environment (SMILE) project was formulated by the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) as a new model which integrates literacy and maternal and child health education, as well as creating a literate environment at home and in communities, thereby contributing to the acquisition and sustainment of women's literacy. The SMILE project has been implemented in Cambodia since 2009. CWDA adapted this project in Cambodia as a pilot project in one district in the outskirts of Phnom Penh city and in one district in Prey Veng province. Currently, SMILE operates in 11 villages in the Phnom Penh municipality. The participants of the SMILE project are illiterate and neo literate expectant mothers and mothers with children age 0-5.

### Aims and Objectives

- To improve women's conditions with regard to education and health
- To build a literate environment at home and community
- To improve the health condition of mothers and children

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODS

### Curriculum and Materials

The content of the curriculum was collected from the three literacy text books developed by the Department of Non-Formal Education in the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS). Topics were selected on the basis of being relevant to health for mothers and children. Selected topics are related to: women and child health care, hygiene, food nutrition, and disease protection. There are also topics on agriculture and community development. The curriculum, the guidebook for facilitators, and the textbook for learners were written by CWDA and approved by the Department of Non-Formal Education of MoEYS. Facilitators were given a guidebook and they are in charge of developing their own lesson plans. The text book contains information about health which is divided into topics (one topic per lesson). Learners are provided with a photocopied textbook. Each lesson includes a large picture to illustrate the topic, an introduction, key words and exercises to complete. They are also given an exercise book, a bag and writing materials.

### Selection of Learners

An assessment is implemented to select learners who are

- either illiterate or neo-literate and
- mothers or expectant mothers. A short literacy/numeracy test is administered and an interview is conducted by the CWDA staff.

### Facilitator Selection and Training

The facilitators were selected on the basis of the following factors: is literate, is willing to help the community, has commitment, is self-confident, and has recognition from the local authority and people in the village. They were first volunteers receiving some monthly incentives from CWDA, but they have recently

become government-contracted teachers. Facilitators were taught the necessary skills and knowledge to successfully deliver SMILE classes. The project orientation workshop for teaching methods and monitoring were organized for three days at CWDA office and attended by facilitators, chiefs of villages and commune council members. The workshop covered theory and hands-on practice (e.g., discussion groups on making lesson plans, teaching demonstration). In addition, 20 days of training in pedagogy was provided by Department of Education Youth and Sport in municipality (DoEYS).

### SMILE Classes

SMILE classes are delivered by the facilitators for 10 months in their villages (2 hours per day and twice a week—the total instruction hours for class is 160 hours). For each class, there are 15 to 20 learners. Those classes take place in the communities (e.g., in the villages' ceremony hall or in the facilitator's house, wherever most appropriate, and is chosen by the facilitator, village chief and commune council members with advice from the CWDA staff). Most of the learners are farmers and require time off from learning to plant and harvest rice in June, July, August, December and January so that they have extra classes in the other months to ensure that the course is completed. The classes cover basic literacy in Khmer, and numeracy combined with health information specific to mothers and children. In each class, the facilitator introduces a health related topic to discuss with learners. This activity is followed by reading and writing activities on the topic. The learning is student-centred (i.e. learners talk more than the facilitator; activities which facilitate learners' active participation are used) and learners are provided an opportunity to apply the knowledge they gained in real life scenarios.

In addition to the textbook, supplementary materials are also used to promote the learned literacy skills in daily life. Those materials include vaccination and child development records, income and expenditure checklist, and children's school books

where teachers and parents communicate in writing.

Learners are also encouraged to:

- read books and other materials about health, which they can borrow from the libraries maintained by the facilitators, at home,
- read and tell stories to their children and other family members as well as to help children with school work and learning, and
- visit their health centre for check-ups and to use vaccination and child development records. Facilitators visit learners' houses to follow-up learners' learning and to encourage those who missed classes to keep attending the class.

### Certificate

A certificate is provided to the learners who achieved passing score from literacy tests administered during the project. The certificate is issued by the Department of Education, Youth and Sport in the Municipality.

## PROGRAMMES IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Regular monitoring and documentation of project activities are conducted throughout the project implementation period. CWDA staff visits each class on a weekly basis and hold monthly meetings with learners, facilitators, and community members. Commune Council members and village chiefs monitor classes 2-3 times a month.

Monitoring and documentation include:

- records of learners' attendance at SMILE classes
- progress and performance of facilitators and progress and performance of learners
- facilitators' and learners' feedback on the curriculum and teaching learning materials
- number of learners using health care services
- learners' feedback on gift packages they received (e.g., Khmer alpha-



- bet poster, books relate to mothers and child care)
- usage of reading corners
- evidence of community support for the class

The evaluation of the project outcomes is conducted at the mid-way point and at the end of the project. It includes the following activities:

- interview the target group, facilitator and stakeholders (chief of village, commune women affairs officer, commune council member); and
- check any evidence of performance of learners which they mentioned they have done (e.g., income and expenditure check list, children's school book, health card).

## Impact

The average number of participants reached annually was 150. From 2009 until 2012, 710 participants attended the SMILE classes. The impact of the project on learners' literacy level, their attitude toward the reading and learning activities, the health condition of mothers and children, practice of maternal and child health care are assessed in comparison with baseline data collected from the beginning

of the project. These comparison data show a clear benefit for the learners in the SMILE. Recently, three additional literacy skill achievement tests developed by the Department of Non-formal Education (DNFE) are incorporated. The scores from these achievement tests will be used in the future to accredit learners' achievements which are equal to the fourth grade level in formal school. The impact on learners and the community, based on observations from project staff and community members and reports from learners, is described below.

### Learners

#### Literacy skills

After attending the SMILE class, the learners were able to read, write, and calculate. They now:

- use children's school books (understand teachers' comments on children's work, and reply to the teachers),
- make income and expense checklists, and
- understand written record in the health card.

#### Learner's testimony:

"After attending in the SMILE class, I can now read a religious book of Buddhism and picture books...I borrow books from a reading corner in the SMILE class. I can now write easy words."

#### Knowledge of Health Care

The participants learned how to take care of themselves during pregnancy and after the birth of a child and recognize the importance of attending regular checkups at the health centre. They have taken the knowledge they gained in the SMILE classes to practice with their family members at home (e.g., educating their children about sanitation and taking their children for treatment at the health centre when they were ill rather than buying medicine from a shop).

#### Learner's testimony:

"After I attended the SMILE class for 3 months, I came to know that my past habits on health were not correct...I have not had good health and my facilitator encouraged me to go to the health centre... As a result, I have discovered I have tuberculosis

and now I take tablets prescribed by the doctor..."

### Others

There is an increased participation in the community and family life. Participants reported increased self-esteem, confidence, and earning potential. Furthermore, they became themselves educators through sharing knowledge with other members of the community.

### Community

The community also gained knowledge about the value of a literate environment and solidarity. The learning was disseminated to the members of the community who have not participated in the SMILE class (e.g., neighbours, husbands, children of non-participant mothers). Several learners are now teaching their children how to read and write and encourage children to go to school. By using income and expenditure checklist, some learners saved money to send their children to school. It was witnessed that there was a decrease in absence rates from local schools.

#### Learner's testimony:

"I joined the SMILE class, because I wanted to get more knowledge and teach my daughter... I can now read, write and calculate and teach my daughter. Sometimes we read the alphabet chart together and I feel that her reading has improved"

The project was also a learning opportunity for village chiefs. In one of the villages, with the village chief's suggestion, after a lesson covered in SMILE class about the importance of cleaning and repairing roads for hygiene and security purpose, learners, facilitators, and village chief went out to the community and improved their communities' road conditions.

### Challenges

One of the challenges is the capacity of facilitators. They have been out of school for a while and one of the facilitators needed to upgrade her literacy skills. They also did not have prior teaching experiences and

knowledge regarding health related issues; therefore, in addition to the 3 day orientation workshop, more training (follow-up) was necessary.

Some learners unfortunately did not make as much progress as anticipated. Exact reasons for this occurrence needs to be investigated; modifications to the methodology needs to be made.

Limited funding is one of the major challenges. Although the current private donors are aware of the importance of supporting literacy, it has been difficult to secure funds for the project.

The expansion of this project to more remote areas, where there are greater numbers of women who are illiterate or neo-literate, would be of great benefit. However the accessibility of those locations would make it difficult for our staff to reach those places in order to implement the projects and to monitor them and provide ongoing support.

### SUSTAINABILITY

Currently, support from CWDA is provided to each SMILE class for 10 months. After the 10 month period, CWDA refers each class to local authorities who continue to run the classes. This initial 10 months only just allows enough time for the stakeholders (e.g., chief of village and commune council) to begin understanding the project, therefore, provision of additional support from CWDA would be ideal in order for the programme to be fully sustainable and to continue in villages. Despite this limitation, some actions have made to promote the sustainability of the programme, such as meeting with commune council to ensure that funding for SMILE classes is written into the community development plans. Also, all facilitators, who were volunteers, are now government contracted teachers and receive payment from the government. CWDA is considering including the topic on the programme's sustainability into the orientation training so that the facilitators, village chiefs and commune council members know how to make plans for the continuation of the programme after CWDA's

withdrawal. Learners, their families, and members of the community are profoundly interested in seeing the project continue. CWDA will hold discussions with the commune councils regarding the continuation of the activities.

### LESSONS LEARNED

CWDA requested that local officials/ commune council members provide support for monitoring. However, they were not provided reimbursement for the travel expenses; therefore, their monitoring visits were less regular than was hoped. It became clear that their travel must be compensated for more effective monitoring. In order to fully embed the programme into the community and become sustainable, provisions for longer term support (two years, instead of one year for each location) of SMILE classes need to be considered.

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### CONTACT

Hun Phanna  
Acting Executive Director, CWDA  
19, street 242, Sangkat Boeung Prolit,  
Khan 7 Makara  
Phnom Penh, Cambodia  
Tel: 855-23-210-449  
Fax: 855-23-210-487  
Email:cwda@online.com.kh

Rie Koarai  
Programme Specialist, Education  
Cooperation Division, ACCU  
6 Fukuromachi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo  
162-8484 Japan  
Tel: +81-3-3269-4559  
Fax: +81-3-3269-4510  
E-mail: koarai@accu.or.jp  
Website: <http://www.accu.or.jp/jp/en/index.html>

## CHINA

# Community Learning Centres (CLC) Programme

### Implementing Organization

Gansu Provincial Institute of Educational Science (SCPIES)

### Date of Inception

1998

### CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

China has made great strides in universalising the provision of basic education in recent years. Following the successful implementation of an extensive national literacy campaign since the 1950s, the government of China also introduced the compulsory education law (1986) which guaranteed all children aged 6 to 15 years the right to receive nine years of free education (i.e. from elementary to junior high school). In short, this law made access to education free and compulsory for every child. In 1988, the government also instituted the famous and ambitious "two-basics" system which primarily aimed to further entrench the 1986 law and thus to improve access to quality basic education for all as well as to expand adult non-formal education and eliminate adult illiteracy by the year 2000. Accordingly, State investment into the educational sector was substantially increased over the years in line with these policy initiatives. As a result, the 2010 national census established that China had achieved near-universal primary school net enrolment and youth literacy rates while its total adult literacy rate rose markedly from 66 per cent in 1982 to 91 per cent in 2000 and 94 per cent by 2010. Overall, the illiteracy rate in the young and middle-aged population group has fallen from over 80 per cent down to about 5 per cent.

However, these impressive gains overshadow the great disparities that continue to plague the country's

educational system. Indeed, it has been established that despite concerted efforts to promote access to education for all, huge disparities continue to exist with regard to the provision of basic education across China's geographically, economically and demographically diverse regions. For instance, in Gansu – one of the country's poorest and most underdeveloped provinces – the overall standard of education remains very low and the nine-year compulsory education system has only been partially successful due to a lack of sustained funding and high levels of poverty among the province's population (although education is free, parents are obliged to pay auxiliary fees which are exorbitant for many). This sad reality is poignantly manifested by the fact that the primary school net enrolment rate in the province was about 79 per cent compared to the national average rate of 99 per cent between 2005 and 2010 and the school dropout rate averaged 15–30 per cent during the same period. As a result, more than 20 per cent of Gansu's total population of over 24 million was illiterate or semi-literate as of year 2000. Currently, the overall illiteracy rate in the province is about 8.69 per cent while the adult illiteracy rates for men and women are 20 per cent and 40 per cent respectively.

Thus, in an effort to combat the scourge of illiteracy, promote general socioeconomic development and agricultural production in the province (about 75 per cent of Gansu's population is based in rural areas and thus largely depends on farming for its existence) as well as improving people's overall well-being, the Gansu Provincial Institute of Educational Science (SCPIES) initiated the Community Learning Centres (CLCs) Programme in 1998.

### THE CLC PROGRAMME

The CLC is an extensive, integrated and community-based literacy and life skills training programme of non-formal education which primarily targets illiterate and semi-literate out-of-school youths and adults (aged 15 to 45) living in the socioeconomically underdeveloped counties of Gansu province. The programme was initially implemented in Shibaxian village, Zhenyuan county (Gansu province) within the context of the central government's "open the west" policy which is primarily "designed to raise the standard of development [and thus the living standards of people living] in the poorer western provinces lagging behind the prosperous eastern seaboard". To this end, the programme provides learners with contextually appropriate basic literacy and life skills training in a range of subjects including:

- basic literacy (reading, writing and arithmetic/math);
- livelihood or income-generating skills training (in, for example, farming techniques, animal husbandry, cash crop production and honey production / bee keeping);
- gender and health awareness (in, for example, HIV/AIDS, maternal health, infant mortality, family planning, personal hygiene, sanitation, reproductive health and family nutrition); and
- environmental management / conservation.

The adoption of such an integrated curriculum is primarily intended to boost programme attendance and retention rates as well as enabling SCPIES to effectively cater for the diverse learning needs of participants, a majority of whom are more interested in acquiring practical life skills that would enable them to improve

their living standards as well as being self-reliant.

### Aims and Objectives

The CLC programme primarily aims to combat the scourge of illiteracy and to facilitate socio-economic development in Gansu province, particularly in Zhenyuan County which is the poorest part of the province. More specifically, the CLC endeavours to:

- combat the scourge of illiteracy among socially disadvantaged and marginalised youths and adults in the province;
- promote equal and sustainable access to quality basic education for all;
- foster a culture and system of lifelong learning in marginalised rural areas;
- improve agricultural productivity in order to increase the incomes of rural communities and combat rural poverty;
- promote rural socio-economic development;
- empower rural communities;
- support governmental educational programmes, especially the nine-year compulsory basic education; and
- strengthen social cohesion.

### PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

To date, SCPIES have instituted a number of practical steps in order to ensure the efficient and sustainable implementation of the CLC programme. These include:

- the construction of the Shibaxian Rural Community Learning Centre which is used as the site of programme activities;
- the mobilisation of learners through community-based sensitisation programmes; and
- establishing functional relations with other specialised institutions including donor agents, local schools and specialised institutes.

#### Recruitment and Training of Programme Facilitators

More often than not, the implementation of community-based non-formal educational programmes

is encumbered by the lack of quality human resources. This is particularly the case in Gansu province which is not only under-developed but has been hard-hit by the migration of young and educated residents to the more developed eastern frontier in search of greener opportunities. In order to circumvent this challenge and to ensure the effective and sustainable implementation of the CLC, SCPIES has established functional partnerships with various specialised institutions including: Gansu Provincial Department of Education; Gansu Provincial Academy of Agriculture Science, Gansu Department of Health and the local school, Banpo Village School. These institutions not only provide SCPIES with technical advice for the design and development of the curriculum and implementation of the programme, but also second their professionals to provide specialised training to CLC programme learners. Given that most of these facilitators are not trained in non-formal education and lack practical training experience, SCPIES provides them with a wide range of skills in non-formal educational practices, including:

- Design, development and use of teaching-learning materials;
- Lesson planning;
- Appropriate adult teaching-learning methods or approaches;
- Class room management practices;
- Development and production of appropriate teaching-learning materials;
- Management of CLCs and networking with other stakeholders, and
- Assessment and evaluation of teaching-learning outcomes.

Once trained, accredited professionals are tasked to provide both literacy and livelihood skills training services to learners for which they are paid a daily stipend of about 1,500 Yuan (about USD 155) for their services.

### Development of Teaching-Learning Materials

In order to facilitate the efficient and sustainable implementation of the CLC programme, SCPIES has developed a variety of teaching-learning materials for use by learners and programme facilitators. It has also

adopted others that were developed and produced by its institutional partners. These include, for example:

- reading and writing in life (produced by the Gansu Provincial Department of Education);
- maths and arithmetic in life (produced by the Gansu Provincial Department of Education); and
- AIDS prevention.

### Teaching-Learning Approaches

As noted above, the CLC is an integrated basic literacy and life skills programme, thus learners are obliged to participate in both the literacy and life skills classes. The teaching-learning units are therefore designed or structured as follows:

**Literacy instruction.** Two qualified teachers have been hired from the local school, Banpo Village School, to provide literacy training (i.e. reading, writing and arithmetic) to learners using teaching-learning materials that were designed and produced by the Gansu Provincial Department of Education. To date, five classes with a total of 220 learners have been conducted.

**Agricultural Training.** Experts from Gansu Provincial Academy of Agriculture Science were hired to train learners in the best practices of producing a variety of local crops (e.g. walnuts, apples, wheat, corn, broom corn millet and beans) and animals (e.g. cattle, sheep and rabbits) on a commercial basis. The course is conducted over three days after which the learners are provided with instruction materials for home-based practical use. About 612 learners have so far participated in the agricultural class.

**Health Awareness.** Health awareness classes are conducted by student volunteers from local medical colleges. Over 852 learners have participated in the health awareness classes.

In addition to these central activities, the programme also provides employment awareness training to community members planning to migrate to other regions in search of work as well as centre-based assistance

to primary school children. To date, about 425 learners have participated in the employment counselling classes. Furthermore, the centre is also used by community members to host various social activities as well as to conduct income-generating learning activities such as hand embroidery.

## PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

### Impact

The CLC programme has made some impressive contributions towards development, poverty alleviation through improved agricultural productivity, social empowerment, and the creation of literate environments in Shibaxian Village. More specifically, the major impacts of the programme are as follows:

The illiteracy rate in Shibaxian Village dropped from a high of 22.9 per cent to 3.26 per cent since the inception of the programme. Most programme graduates are now able to read and write about 2,000 basic Chinese characters. Furthermore, the programme has engendered a culture of learning within the community and as such, many parents are now more inclined to support the education of their children than before.

The programme has enabled a number of villagers to establish viable income-generating projects and thus to improve their living standards as well as promoting community development. For instance, one participant, Wang Naiwa, largely depended on subsistence crop farming before participating in the CLC programme's agricultural training project. However, after participating in the programme, Wang Naiwa established a viable crop and beaver rabbit production project and now earns about 5,000 Yuan (about USD 775) per year. Not only has this project liberated Wang from his heavy dependence on subsistence farming, but it has also prevented him from migrating to other regions on an annual basis in search of work. Furthermore, it has also enabled him to produce more food resources for his family and to invest in the education of his children,

Apart from improving local living standards, the programme also allows community members to cooperate in undertaking social activities. In so doing, the programme has helped to enhance social cohesion, peaceful co-existence and perverse local cultural traditions,

The programme has created opportunities for ordinary community members to proactively participate in the operation and administration of the learning centre. This bottom-up approach to CLC management has enabled communities to better understand the limits and possibilities of the education process and see more value in its results as well as taking greater responsibility in the development of their communities.

### Challenges

Despite these successes, the programme is also encumbered with practical challenges. More often than not, community members find it difficult to balance the need of participating in the classes with the need to undertake their daily livelihood activities. This has often forced many potential learners to forgo participation in the programme or to participate only on an intermittent basis. Furthermore, cultural traditions such as child rearing have also prevented many women from participating in the programme. The programme also lacks adequate funding since it only has one funding partner (Oxfam Hong Kong). Financial constraints have, in turn, forced SCPIES to maintain a low intake rate as well as to reduce the number of centre-based activities.

## CONTACT

### SCPIES

Qin Zhigong (Project Leader)  
Email [qinzhigong@126.com](mailto:qinzhigong@126.com)  
Tel.: 0931 896 06 79  
Fax: 86 0931 896 06 79

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# Teaching the Nomads in the Wild

## Implementing Organization

Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra (RLEK)

## Language of Instruction

Hindi, Gujjari

## Funding

The Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India (the first three years), the community

## Date of Inception

1993

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

With more than 350 tribal communities, India is estimated to have a nomadic population of at least 60 million (between 7-10% of the population). Sadly, marginalization continues to characterize the nomadic experience while urbanization and environmental conservation schemes continue to threaten the livelihood of nomads. The Van Gujjars—India's legendary and colorful nomads of Uttarakhand—have not been an exception.

For centuries the community of Van Gujjars has lived in the forests of the Siwalik and the Himalayan highland pastures where the summer months are spent. The people have developed a sustainable relationship with the environment, becoming part of its biodiversity. Their lives center on tending to their buffaloes and producing milk products. However, over the last few decades, Van Gujjars like many other nomadic groups have had to deal with rapid changes to their way of life; while a large section of top-down policies remain highly unsympathetic to them. It is deeply unfortunate that the systemic inequities and injustices have deprived these communities of their fundamental human rights such as the right to access education.

Due to their nomadic way of life and unwillingness to move out of their forest dwellings, the peace loving, vegetarian Van Gujjars have remained dominantly illiterate.

It has been against this background that for more than four decades the Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra (RLEK) - a Non-Governmental Organization - has been working with the tribal and nomadic communities in the hill state of Uttarakhand. The organization has evolved after years of struggle against the discrimination towards underprivileged and marginalized Van Gujjar communities in the region. The organization's strategy has been "Reaching the Unreached" and "Including the Excluded". Its efforts aim at achieving "a just and sustainable society" and its Mission Statement has been "to empower indigenous groups, marginalized populations, women and children to claim their rights."

To meet these goals, since its inception in 1970s RLEK has pursued different lines of actions and conducted projects in various but interlinked fields such as legal protection, gender equity, women rights and empowerment, environmental protection, human rights, and adult education and literacy.

Under the aegis of the National Literacy Mission, RLEK identified illiteracy of the Van Gujjars to be the root cause of their exploitation. To remedy the situation, in the early 1990s it started a unique and innovative adult literacy programme - Teaching the Nomads in the Wild. The programme has been appraised both nationally and internationally. In 1998 the Rotary International Awards for Service to Humanity (India) Trust Award was bestowed upon RLEK for its innovative education programme for the Van Gujjars. In the same year, the program won the UNESCO National Literacy Mission (UNESCO-

NLM) Award for its outstanding contribution to the Adult Education Programme for the tribal Van Gujjar community.

## Aims and Objectives

The main objectives of the programme were:

- to promote literacy in the Van Gujjar community with a special focus on improving their livelihood skills which is mainly dependent on the markets of dairy products
- to raise awareness and thus protect the community from exploitation at the hands of forest officials and money lenders
- To empower the community to stand up for their rights and bring an end to the oppression they have faced for years.

## The Bane of Illiteracy

The increasing illiteracy and ignorance did put them at the receiving end of the government officials, forest bureaucracy, moneylenders, middlemen and milk traders. The marginalized and politically non-existent Van Gujjars used to be cheated of their dues by milk traders. This was simply because the community did not know how to count and keep an account of the milk supplied and payment received. For long Van Gujjars used to barter milk for their daily essentials. In fact, milk traders used to advance loans to Van Gujjars at a very high rate of interest, and commodities such as cattle feed required by them were made available at their doorsteps with a view to ensure that the community remains dependent on them. The Van Gujjars are true followers of Gandhi, believing in need and not greed. Their philosophy is that one should not have more belongings than they can carry on their or their mules' back.

## Nomadic Instinct

Ecologists who have studied the community from close quarters point out that the nomadic practice contributes to the regeneration of vegetation in the forest stretches left behind by the community for summer. And as the winter approaches, Van Gujjars return to the forests stretches in Shivaliks. For those unaccustomed to such a way of life the nomadic instinct of the community may appear terribly unrewarding and anachronistic. But nomadism has its own rewards and excitement. Van Gujjars, who have a sound insight into the intricacies of nature, can be described as barefoot botanists, since they know each plant and herb in and around their forest dwellings.

## Literacy Key to the solution

The nomadic lifestyle, involving habitation deep inside the forest and a thinly spread population over a vast geographic stretch made the task of turning the Van Gujjars literate highly challenging. Moreover they were not mentally attuned to the benefits of being exposed to literacy and education. But the RLEK programme was clearly against changing cultural patterns of the Van Gujjars, existing only for the sake of creating a well-functioning adult literacy programme. RLEK believed in preserving the culture of Van Gujjars and strengthening their culture by imparting education.

## INNOVATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

To support this ambitious and innovative adult education programme, a forest academy of sorts was put in place with 350 highly motivated volunteer teachers. These young barefoot "literacy missionaries" were trained and deployed in the Van Gujjar settlements to teach the tribals at their doorsteps. Indeed RLEK's educational campaign deep in the wild was reminiscent of the ancient Indian gurkula where the teacher and taught had a "noble and abiding relationship". For instance, Puran Singh, a teacher who used to sleep in the dwelling of the community, along with their herds of buffaloes, taught

them to read road signs, billboards and registration numbers of heavy vehicles, many of which used to zoom past Dehra Dun after killing their cattle. The timings of the teaching were decided upon after taking into account the daily routine of the community. For Van Gujjars families in the RNP it was a point of prestige to host these volunteer teachers. Indeed, sharing the colourful and healthy lifestyle of this nomadic pastoral tribe was a novelty for them.

## The Mobile teachers

In order to prevent recidivism, the teachers trekked up and down with the community and their buffalo herds during their transhumance and also stayed with them in the highland pastures during the summer months. And they would move back to the forests of Shivaliks for the winter along with the community. In this way, it was ensured that there was continuity in the adult literacy programme which laid stress on functional aspects of literacy, making the community reliant in keeping it accounts, lodging police complaints, petitioning the authorities for the redressal of grievances and fighting for their rights. The community was taught how to read and write Hindi besides simple arithmetic.

## Threat to the programme

The RLEK adult literacy campaign also faced opposition from RNP authorities who tried to put hurdles in the movement of volunteer teachers, by citing the provisions of forest conservation laws. As Lai Nambardar, a Van Gujjar elder from Mohand range said, "They (RLEK) are doing what no one else dared or even thought of".

RLEK got three warning letters from the forest department stating that educating the Van Gujjars in the forest area was illegal and the adult education programme (which was a national programme) should be stopped with immediate effect. The forest department further stated that if the programme was not discontinued with immediate effect the volunteers would be arrested. Subsequently, RLEK called a meeting of Van Gujjars and volunteers in

which it declared that any volunteer who would be arrested for educating the Van Gujjars would be rewarded with Rs. 10,000 by RLEK and also a letter would be written to the President of India for honoring such volunteers. This announcement regenerated the confidence and courage amongst the young volunteers. After seeing the courage and commitment of the young educators the Forest Department was forced into a silence.

## Use of Information Communication Technology (ICT)

RLEK believes that if you are empowering someone you are disempowering another. This was true in case of the Van Gujjars who became empowered through the adult education programme. They were harassed by the forest department and milk traders/middlemen, this harassment reaching its height in 1994. Under these circumstances RLEK asked the Ministry of Telecommunication, Government of India to allot two frequencies of wireless i.e., 167.525 MHZ & 167.725 MHZ, and RLEK distributed 100 wireless sets to the Van Gujjars, so that in an emergency situation they could communicate with each other.. This is how RLEK used the tool of Information Communication Technology in the form of wireless, which gave these communities the much needed confidence and boost. Now, each family is also using mobile handsets.

The United Nations invited me as a panelist and Mr. Talib, a Van Gujjar neo-literate and user of wireless technology at the World Summit in Geneva held in December, 2003 to deliver a talk on the importance of local content within Information and Communication Technology.

## A Challenging Campaign

In order to counter the argument that the RLEK literacy campaign in Van Gujjar settlements was an "eye wash" and "publicity stunt", Van Gujjar Saksharata Mela (Literacy Festivals) were organized at Mohand near Dehra Dun every 6 months where neo-literate Van Gujjar men,

women and children demonstrated their literacy skill in the presence of educationists, social workers and administrators. Mustaq, a young Van Gujjar boy from Saharanpur said that a year ago his world was confined to just grazing buffaloes and selling milk. He was candid enough to state, "I did not even know what literacy was".

Similarly, a young Van Gujjar girl Fatima Bibi said, "I have picked up a bit of mathematics, I can now easily calculate the amount of milk I sell and put my foot down when my customers refuse to pay an appropriate amount". Another Van Gujjar adult Abdul Rehman observed, "Now we not only keep our settlements clean but have also become aware of something called personal hygiene".

Thanks to the exposure to functional literacy, the once docile Van Gujjars have now started asserting themselves. Many neo literate Van Gujjar men and women are now discussing the virtues of a small family and various methods of fertility control. Following the enumeration of the community members into the Voters' List, many Van Gujjar men and women have successfully fought the Panchayat elections. What's more many of them have become Panchayat Pradhans (Chiefs). It is tribute to the boldness and confidence that the adult literacy programme has helped instill in them, that many Van Gujjar men and women have addressed international audiences in countries such as Brazil and Denmark.

### **Success of Adult Education creates the demand for Children's Education**

The success and benefits of adult literacy nudged the Van Gujjar adults to request RLEK to set up schools for imparting formal education to their children. Thus, the success of adult education created the demand for children education as they realized that if their children get a head start in life through education, it would benefit the community in a synergistic fashion. These adults were the first generation to be educated and similarly their children are also the first generation to receive formal education. Thus RLEK set up four well-equipped

schools exclusively for the children of Van Gujjar community at Mohand, Daula Thappar, Sahasra and Tarbar at Gaindikhata.

These schools are a reversal of the usual top-down approach, as RLEK believes in the power of grass roots; thus the land for the school is donated by the community, while the cost of construction, furniture etc. is borne by RLEK with support of an external funding. This not only works as cost sharing structure but it also ensures active participation of the community. The location of the school is decided according to the specifications of the community, which eliminates the problem of access.

In an endeavor to bring about holistic development through education, RLEK has facilitated all its schools with well-equipped libraries, not only the children of the school but also the neo-literates of the community.

### **PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES**

With the support of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, RLEK started the Adult Education Programme in the Van Gujjar Community in October 1993. The need for initiating a literacy programme was identified in one of the need-assessment interventions that RLEK had carried out with the Van Gujjar community. In one of the large open meetings in forests, some members of the community stated that most of the problems they face were results of illiteracy. In taking an immediate step, RLEK, ran inquiries to assess the demand for literacy programmes. Almost the entire community responded positively. Through further negotiations, it was suggested that to start a literacy programme RLEK provide free teachers and learning materials and the community contribute by providing board and lodging. Initially, about 500 Van Gujjars showed their interest in such an arrangement and thus the literacy programme kicked off with these families. After considering the result of the programme, the families who were reluctant or skeptical in the

beginning also requested to join at later points.

Teaching the Nomads in the Wild was a need-based intervention and unlike many similar literacy programmes which target children, RLEK decided to focus the literacy programme on adults. The underlying assumption for taking such an approach was the idea that once adults understand the importance of education, they would automatically demand for and support education of their children.

In order to adapt to the special lifestyle of the nomads and their social and economic background, RLEK employed a series of innovative measures. First of all, literacy was integrated with other issues of concern to the community such as veteran health and livelihood security, thus providing an opportunity for economic and social empowerment.

Moreover, as it was decided to maintain the learners' interest and to avoid long breaks, volunteer teachers travelled with the community during the transmigratory cycle. The programme was unique in the sense that volunteers adapted themselves to the lifestyle of the Gujjars and there was no disruption of teaching during migration. To maintain the continuity of education during summers when Gujjars trek along with their herds of cattle to the upper reaches of the Himalayas, these voluntary teachers joined the Gujjar caravan. Similarly, they moved down to the plains along with the Gujjar with the onset of autumn. This activity was termed as "Literacy on the move".

The teaching methodologies adopted were a combination of a lecture and participatory system based on the needs and demands of the learners. The local languages (Gujjari) and Hindi were used as the main languages of instruction. RLEK barefoot teachers used to hold classes underneath the canopy trees at the time convenient to the community members. Evening classes were arranged for community members who could not spare time during the day.

The community participation has been a very distinctive feature of Teaching the Nomads in the Wild

programme. It has been ongoing and ever-present during the entire process of programme planning and implementation.

### Learning Material

The learning materials were prepared with the help of the community and all efforts were made to make sure the content is relevant to the social reality of the nomadic life. The localized content was used to facilitate the community for easy and better learning. The prospective learners were also involved in the entire process.

Three primers, named "Naya Safar" (New Journey) based on the technique of Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL), were prepared with the community's assistance and in Hindi and Gujarati - local languages of the community and took into account specific vocabulary of the nomads and their day-to-day experience. Stories and parables from the everyday life of the Van Gujjars as well as lessons on cooperative systems, social harmony, significance of environmental conservation, personal hygiene, family planning, child health care, immunization, education, cattle breeding, milk production and marketing were also incorporated.

### Recruitment and Training of Volunteer Teachers

The initial group of teachers consisted of 350 volunteers who travelled with the community from the foothills of Himalayas to the higher alpines. Each volunteer was put in charge of five families who lived nearby.

The volunteer teachers were selected from high school graduates who were out of employment and looking for jobs. Almost none of them had teaching experience before and at the beginning this made some of the families skeptical. As volunteers had to trek with the community, they were also checked to be physically fit and capable of handling difficult conditions. The volunteers were given a month long training in the culture and practice of Van Gujjar community as well as special training on how to survive in the wild and

learning methodology (i.e., in terms of teaching skills for the volunteers).

The volunteer teachers were not remunerated but contingency expenses were provided. The boarding and lodging was also taken care of by the community and volunteers would share the same food as the community.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to secure transparency and also as a means of self-evaluation, every year, Shaksharta Mela (Literacy Fairs) are organized in which the members of community would show their newly acquired learning skills before the public, press and interested citizens to come and see for themselves how far the community has learnt to read and write. In addition, internal and external evaluations are also conducted to assess the results. The evaluation reports were submitted to the funding agency annually. By the end of the third year of the programme, an external evaluation was conducted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

### CHALLENGES AND IMPACT

#### Challenges

The main challenge of working with Van Gujjars has been the marginalized and isolated nature of the community. Since the community resides in forests which are isolated from the outside world, not only has it been very difficult to reach the community but also to bring their voices and concerns to the policy making level and develop the programmes based on their real needs and demands.

In addition, the nomadic lifestyle and the seasonal migration of the community brought its own challenges to the programme. The volunteers had to be very committed as working implied surviving harsh conditions.

#### Impact

A total of 21,000 Gujjars became literate during the course of the programme. Literacy was defined as

the ability to read and write and the following three levels were introduced to assess the literacy skills of the participants:

- **Level 1** – the person can write his/her name and read and write numbers between 1 and 50 at the pace of thirty words per minute.
- **Level 2** – the person can read and write simple and short sentences and is able to write in symmetry and use proper distance between the words. The person can read and write numbers between 1 and 100 along with doing simple mathematical functions such as adding and subtracting
- **Level 3** – the person can read advertisements on billboards, instructions on the roads and forest boards, headlines of newspapers, and fill-in the everyday forms. In addition to the subtraction and adding, the person can understand and use multiplication and division plus concepts such as time, weight, measurement, currency calculation, distance, area, interest rate, etc.

At level II & III reading pace should be increased in comparison to level I. In level II & III difference of reading pace depends upon words, length of sentences, vowels, and phrase.

In level II & III, a person can read & write numbers and do addition and subtraction with simple mathematics like multiplication, division, etc. The concept is very clear: they learn from simplistic to more complex skills and gradually increase their speed in reading, writing and numeracy. If we divide all sound symbols into five categories; very high, high, moderate, low and nil, the sound symbols which fall into the very high category used level I and those which fall in category high and moderate will come in level 2 and rest in level 3.

The successful launch of the programme made it move to a second phase where the education programme continued by assisting the new literates to use their literacy skills to acquire information on various issues like health, sanitation, environment protection and management, rights of people, children's immunization, veterinary care etc.

Overall, the literacy initiatives with this community led to their enhanced

negotiation skills and empowerment. As a result, the community was able to fight for their rights. Since then, harassment in the hands of the forest department has decreased as the community can now read the government's orders by themselves and the forest officials cannot falsify and manipulate the information. The community has been able to take two hectares of land from the government which is allotted for those who want to settle down. In the same line, The Van Gujjars were able to fight for their voting rights and have succeeded in securing them. Thanks to their acquired numeracy skills, they can now calculate the rate of interest and the right price for their milk products. In addition, no more middlemen for the business trade is needed which in return maximizes their gain from the products.

Literacy has also had visible impacts on the health aspect of the community. Some of the best learners have turned into being paramedics and paravets. Now the community can read the instructions on medicine labels and check their expiry dates; thus, unlike earlier, they are not being cheated into buying expired products.

As had been foreseen, the successful implementation of the adult literacy program created the demand from the community itself for children education programmes. RLEK has established two mobile schools, four primary formal schools for Van Gujjar children and fourteen formal schools for the marginalized communities residing in rugged and remote areas in the hills of Uttarakhand. Also RLEK established 154 non-formal education centers after 3 years which for 2 years have been running literacy initiatives in the areas where the Van Gujjar community has been resettled.

### LESSONS LEARNED

The following are some of the lessons which have emerged during the course of the programme

Community participation is essential in order to ensure the sustainability of any endeavor. In the case of Teaching the Nomads in the Wild, the community has been actively involved in planning and the implementation

process (e.g. expressing the demand for the programme, contributing to the costs, preparing the material, etc.). This close collaboration with the community has lent transparency to the activities being carried out and the community realized that they are the main stakeholders in the project.

The learning material prepared should be relevant and mirror the life of the target group. It is much more effective if the materials are in the local language and have localized content so that the target group can engage with them easily and associate them to their immediate environment.

The programme did not restrict itself to literacy, but it connected literacy to livelihood, health, environment and other cross-cutting themes that nomads were dealing with in their everyday life. Education was seen as a tool to provide solutions to the problems being faced by the community and thus, a lot of emphasis was laid on skill enhancement through connecting literacy to other areas of life. This holistic view of learning has been considered as one of the key success factors of the programme.

### SUSTAINABILITY

Since the start of the programme, the beneficiaries were treated as equal partakers in the functioning and implementation of the project. The community was sustaining the project and did so for 5 years. When the adult literacy phase of the programme was carried out, the community bore the cost of boarding and lodging the volunteers. Thereafter the model became self-sustainable through the continuous support of the community. Unfortunately RLEK could not raise funds for the teacher's contingencies and other material. The programme suffered after 5 years but the same teachers who taught the parents are now teaching their children in the school.

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### CONTACT

Mr. Avdhush Kaushal  
Chairperson  
68/1 Surya lok Colony, Rajpur Road,  
Dehradun – 248001, Uttarakhand,  
INDIA  
Tel: ++91-135-2746071, 2745539  
Fax: ++91-135-2746881, 2741931  
rlek@vsnl.com, rlek@sancharnet.in  
<http://www.rlek.org>

## INDONESIA

# Literacy for the 21st Century: Promoting Innovative Literacy Education in Coping with Natural Disasters

### Implementing organization

Centre for the Development of Early Childhood, Non-formal and Informal Education

### Language of instruction

Bahasa Indonesia, Javanese (and other local languages)

### Date of inception

2008

### Programme partners

Direktorate General of Early Childhood, Non-formal and Informal Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, provincial and district education and health administrators, National Board of Disaster Management, Indonesian Red Cross

### Funding

Government, Directorate of Community Education Development, Ministry of Social Affairs, provincial government (Central Java, Jogjakarta and Lampung), National Courses Association, National Community Learning Centres (CLCs) Forum, Indonesian Red Cross, Indonesian SAR, UNESCO, small contributions by participants

## COUNTRY CONTEXT

Indonesia is on course to meet the educational targets set by the Millennium Development Goals. The country has made great progress in improving access and equity in education. This is especially true of primary education, which is largely responsible for Indonesia's high overall literacy rates. Much of this progress is the result of increased spending on education, following the Indonesian government's constitutional amendment requiring that at least 20 per cent of the

annual budget be allocated towards education. Despite this progress, challenges in education remain, not least with regards to equity. The poorest members of the population have less access to early-childhood, senior-secondary, tertiary and adult education than other segments of society. For example, only 4 per cent of higher education students aged between 19 and 22 come from the poorest 40 per cent of the population. (World Bank 2012)

Since the Asian financial crisis in 1998, Indonesia has achieved economic growth and substantially reduced the number of people living below the national poverty line of \$1.25 per day. However, the number of people living below this line remains large – at around 30 million – while a further 65 million live just above it, at heightened risk to falling back into poverty. One of the reasons for the poor's vulnerability is Indonesia's exposure to natural disasters. Over the past 30 years, Indonesia has experienced an average of 289 natural disasters a year, with an annual death toll of around 8,000 people. In response, the Indonesian Government has made disaster risk management one of its priorities by introducing a comprehensive risk management approach, including prevention, preparation, emergency response and recovery plans. However, the country has struggled to implement regulations and to establish capacities to cope with natural disasters. Literacy for the 21st Century: Promoting Innovative Literacy Education in Coping with Natural Disasters fits well with Indonesia's ongoing efforts to enhance resilience against natural disasters and to improve education supporting this goal. The programme not only builds risk management

capacities at community and family level, but also increases access to education for indigent adults. (World Bank 2012)

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The Centre for the Development of Early Childhood, Non-formal and Informal Education implements the Literacy for the 21st Century: Promoting Innovative Literacy Education in Coping with Natural Disasters (hereafter referred to as the 'natural disaster literacy programme') in cooperation with the Directorate of Community Education Development. Both institutions are part of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. The role of the centre is to implement community education programmes to further literacy education, promote women's empowerment and poverty alleviation, and increase coverage of early childhood education. The natural disaster literacy programme is one of a series of literacy programmes promoting the empowerment and literacy attainment of disenfranchised populations, known as AkrAB!. Other AkrAB! literacy programmes address subjects such as basic literacy, entrepreneurship skills and literacy, family literacy, folklore-based literacy and establishing a writing culture.

Delivered since 2008, the natural disaster literacy programme aims to mitigate the harmful effects of natural disaster on communities by equipping participants with the knowledge and skills they need to cope. The programme also raises awareness of the risks associated with natural disasters and helps communities in recover from disaster. In the five years between 2008 and 2013, the programme has reached around

44,000 learners in Central Java, Jogjakarta and Lampung provinces, all of which are prone to natural disasters. Most of the programme's beneficiaries were poor adults and out-of-school young people with low literacy levels.

### Aims and Objectives

The geographic location of Indonesia puts the country at risk of natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunamis, floods and landslides. Indonesia's vulnerability to such disasters prompted the Centre for the Development of Early Childhood, Non-formal and Informal Education to develop the natural disaster literacy programme as a model of community education. By increasing literacy proficiency levels within communities affected by natural disasters, the programme aims to mitigate the effects and to increase awareness of natural disasters. Specifically, the programme aims to:

- Guide victims in handling and coping with natural disasters;
- Provide literacy education for victims of natural disasters;
- Raise awareness for risks associated with natural disasters;
- Expand access to literacy education by establishing community learning centres (CLCs) and community reading centres (CRCs);
- Introduce training for quick disaster response (knowing the first steps to take when a natural disaster occurs) in communities;
- Provide recovery and rehabilitation services to families and communities after natural disasters occur.

The main target groups of the programme are adults and out-of-school young people. The programme also provides services to indigenous and minority groups.

### PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

#### Teaching and Learning: Approaches and Methodologies

The teaching approach and lesson content are based on the needs of

people who have experienced natural disasters. The learning approach is based on their experiences, an approach which incorporates the following:

- A participatory approach integrating life skills into literacy education;
- Teaching in mother tongue;
- 'Joyful learning' through games, songs and dance;
- An emphasis on empowering learners.
- The natural disaster literacy programme's approach comprises the following:
  - CLCs and learning materials support training and learning programmes in disaster risk reduction;
  - CLCs advance disaster preparedness;
  - Local volunteers increase local capacities to mitigate and cope with disasters;
  - Emphasis on equal access to training and education, especially for women and out-of-school young people.

### Teaching Content

The programme teaches basic literacy and entrepreneurship skills, with a focus on issues relevant to natural disasters. Participants learn about the causes and characteristics of natural disasters, while facilitators teach them about methods and strategies to cope, how to mitigate the effects, and how to recover from traumatic events. In addition, participants learn about safety measures concerning natural disasters. All literacy content follows the general guidelines set out in the national standards for basic literacy and entrepreneurship skills training.

Programme content for each locality reflects the situation following a natural disaster. The learning activities, syllabus and learning materials vary from locality to locality. For example, in Central Java, participants learn more about characteristics of volcanoes because this area is prone to volcanic eruptions. Teaching content in Jogjakarta Province, on the other hand, focuses on earthquakes, which are more likely to occur in this area. The programme in villages in Lampung province emphasises landslides due to the location's vulnerability to such natural disasters.

To make the programme accessible to participants, facilitators employ locals to work as tutors to support learners. Learning materials include books, posters, magazines, newspapers leaflets, DVDs and CDs. Facilitators use computers, radio and TV as teaching media to transmit information about natural disasters. For example, an assignment could require groups of learners to search the internet for information on natural disasters. The teaching materials are developed by the Centre for the Development of Early Childhood, Non-formal and Informal Education in cooperation with the National CLCs Forum and the National Courses Association, as well as education administrators and local advisors.

### Structure and Process

Lessons take place three times a week in a CLC of a community learning hub. Courses are also offered in the homes of villagers. The programme's courses last 10 months, with, on average, between 10 and 15 participants. Besides literacy training, courses also teach learners vocational skills such as cooking, sewing, farming, cattle breeding and fertilization techniques.

### Accreditation, Monitoring and Evaluation

As part of the monitoring and evaluation process, CLCs are required to become accredited by an independent accreditation board, made up of government officials coordinated by the Community Education Directorate. The accreditation process for the natural disaster literacy programme is based on evaluation against eight national education standards: content, process (teaching and learning), graduate competency, personnel, facility, governance, finance, and evaluation standards. At the outset of the accreditation process, CLCs fill out a form, which is reviewed by the accreditation board. Board members also visit CLCs as part of the accreditation process and interview local programme facilitators. The board holds in a plenary meeting to decide which CLCs are to be accredited.

The programme administrators track outcomes through anecdotal evi-

dence with the aim of improving the curriculum over time. The Centre for the Development of Early Childhood, Non-formal and Informal Education interviews participants, teachers and members of local communities to ascertain the effect of the programme on learners. Learners do not have to complete an exam at the end of the programme.

## Facilitators

The programme employs volunteer and paid facilitators. Each facilitator teaches between 10 and 15 learners. Paid volunteers receive a salary of USD 1 per hour. The Centre for the Development of Early Childhood, Non-formal and Informal Education provides training for facilitators. The most competent facilitators are invited by the centre to become trainers for future facilitators.

## IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The natural disaster literacy programme served 43,449 people between 2008 and 2013. In addition, its two partner programmes, in basic literacy and entrepreneurship skills training, reached 371,000 and 102,000 people respectively over the same period. The basic literacy and entrepreneurship skills training programmes are similar to the natural disaster literacy programme in their aim to improve the literacy skills of learners. However, these programmes do not focus on natural disaster mitigation techniques in their teaching content. Participants benefit from the literacy training, while, through the entrepreneurship programme, they gain life skills, which increases their chances of earning a decent income in the future. The programme helps communities to be better prepared for natural disasters and it assists families in the process of recovery following a natural disaster.

## LESSONS LEARNED

To make the natural disaster literacy programme successful, facilitators need to make sure that learners are fully acquainted with the programme

as it takes time for learners to warm to new content.

Support from local leaders is necessary to effectively implement a programme, because it maintains the motivation of learners and prevents conflicts among facilitators.

It is necessary to maintain learners' motivation during periods when they are not affected by natural disasters so that they can continue to learn and be prepared. That is why new programmes should be delivered. The micro finance unit programme, for example, established a mini bank, which participants joined in order to save money and lend it at very small rates of interest. At the end of the year, the organization distributes the benefits of the micro finance unit to each member, based on the sum of the saving and loans.

People who have lived through a natural disaster need to be treated with respect and be given time to cope before new elements of the programme are introduced. They tend to have reservations about new programmes as their immediate concern is often their own physical circumstance.

Indications that a programme is running well include:

- Learners are more actively participating;
- Learners show enthusiasm in learning new things;
- Stakeholders are supportive of the programme.

## CHALLENGES

The facilitators face a number of challenges in implementing the programme:

- Not all programme personnel have the full range of required competencies;
- Limited infrastructure and facilities to support the natural literacy disaster programme, which requires communities to help by providing facilities;
- Limited funding for literacy programmes in general and for the natural disaster literacy programme in particular;

- Difficulty in raising awareness of the programme in villages, including in recruiting volunteers and tutors for the programme in rural areas;
- Challenging to use ICTs with limited funding;
- Learners tend to leave the basic literacy component of programme once they are able to read and write as they prefer to learn other skills such as planting, cooking and making natural fertilizers;
- Local leaders' strong commitment towards their communities can lead to conflict that can negatively affect the implementation of programmes.

## SUSTAINABILITY

The community learning centres are central to the sustainability of the programme since they provide learners with long-term access to training and learning materials. In terms of financial sustainability, the programme is supported by local government. Further financial support comes from local businesses, which donate money to the programme. The programme's approach and focus on natural disaster recovery also supports the sustainability of the programme as the model applies to many other areas in Indonesia with similar natural disaster problems.

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## CONTACT

Dr Ade Kusmiadi  
Centre for the Development of Early Childhood, Non-formal and Informal Education Regional 2, Directorate General of Early Childhood, Non-formal and Informal Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, Republic of Indonesia  
Diponegoro Street, No. 250 Ungaran, Semarang  
Central Java, Indonesia  
50511  
Email: adekoesmiadi@yahoo.com

# The Vocational Village Programme

## Implementing Organization

Directorate General of Early Childhood, Centre for Non-Formal and Informal Education Region 2 and the Vocational Village Committee

## Language of Instruction

Bahasa Indonesia

## Funding

Directorate General of Early Childhood, the Centre for Non-Formal and Informal Education Region 2, Directorate of Curriculum and Training, the District Office of Education

## Date of Inception

2009 – 2011 (independently after 2011)

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The Vocational Village Programme was piloted in Gemawang Village in the Jambu District of Semarang Regency, Central Java Province and, as a result of its success, has since been implemented in 35 other districts across the province. The rationale behind the Vocational Village was to build upon successful literacy programmes that have already been implemented in Indonesia with the addition of life skills education. As most participants come from poor or disadvantaged backgrounds, life skills education is necessary for income generation and livelihood development. Literacy skills also need to be incorporated into the daily activities of participants.

Indonesia is home to a population of 237 million people that inhabit around 6,000 of the country's 17,000 islands. It is a diverse population, with as many as 300 ethnic groups speaking about 680 different native languages. The national language is Bahasa Indonesia, also known as Indonesian. Central Java Province,

where the Vocational Village project is based, is the third most crowded province after West and East Java. In 2007, about 1,766,422 of its inhabitants between the ages of 15 and 64 were looking for employment. The province is also one of nine Indonesian provinces to have a total of more than 200,000 people with low levels of literacy. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2012), Central Java has the second highest number of non-literate adults out of all 33 provinces. As there is a widely recognised correlation between illiteracy and poverty, it is necessary to raise levels of literacy in Central Java, as well as the country as a whole.

Despite the low levels of literacy on the island of Java, however, the Indonesian government has a long history of promoting literacy, initiating its first literacy campaign in 1945. The Indonesian Ministry of Education considers literacy to be "a human right, a tool of personal empowerment and a means for social and human development. It is a pre-requisite for other types of learning and is crucial for every child, youth and adult. It is essential for eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality and ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy." The Constitution of 1945 includes an initiative to improve the well-being of Indonesians by attaining education for all. Since establishing the Constitution, the Indonesian government has placed great value on the development of literacy and income-generating skills, and many adult literacy initiatives in Indonesia are designed primarily to improve entrepreneurial skills in order to generate income.

From 2006 to 2009, the number of non-literates in Indonesia decreased from 12,88 million to 8,7 million. This decrease was a result of the literacy

initiatives that were put into place and the country's strong recognition of the importance of raising literacy levels. More recently, the Indonesian Ministry of Education has focused on accelerating literacy initiatives and, as a result, two important events occurred in 2006: Indonesia joined the UNESCO Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) and the Presidential Instruction No.5 was signed, making the literacy initiative a national movement and strengthening partnerships between different ministries.

The LIFE initiative is "a key operational mechanism for accelerating progress towards achieving the goals and purposes of the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD), by targeting countries with the greatest literacy needs." Indonesia is one of nine countries in the Asia Pacific region that is part of LIFE and, along with China, it has reached the highest adult literacy rate among these nine countries between 2000 and 2008 (92%). It is also on track to meeting the Education for All (EFA) goal of improving literacy by 50% by 2015.

## Development Agency of Non-Formal and Informal Education (P2PNFI)

Region 2 of the Development Agency of Non-Formal and Informal Education (P2PNFI) falls under the Indonesian National Ministry of Education. Its main duty is to develop learning models that can be used by both governmental and non-governmental Non-Formal Education (NFE) institutions. These models are developed on the themes of Early Childhood Education and community development, providing levels of education equivalent to elementary school, junior high school and secondary school. Courses usually cover a period of four to twelve months and are divided into

two forms of vocational training: 1) Courses for those looking to gain employment (e.g. sewing, computer use, and mechanics) and 2) courses for those looking to start their own business (e.g. catfish, cattle, goat or vegetable farming).

Since 2009, the Directorate for Community Education has been developing programmes focused on improving skills such as basic literacy (reading and writing), income-generating skills, family literacy, disaster prevention skills and preparedness, and local arts and culture (i.e. the importance of preserving cultural heritage). In 2009, the P2PNFI developed a model for a Vocational Village, which would build upon existing programmes by adding a focus on entrepreneurial skills. It would equip learners with practical skills to be used for running a business and generating income, thereby becoming empowered members of the community. The programme was developed with input from participants to ensure it was based on their specific learning needs.

## THE VOCATIONAL VILLAGE

The Vocational Village is a community centre in a rural area where villagers can receive vocational and entrepreneurial skills training. Learners can put their newly acquired skills to practical use by either seeking employment from someone else or by creating a 'business group', which is a group of five to ten participants that agree to start a business together.

Entrepreneurial skills are defined by the Ministry of Education and Culture as "the ability of basic entrepreneurship skills trained through productive learning and income generating skills which could raise literacy levels and income of learners, either individually or collectively as one of the efforts of literacy enhancement as well as poverty alleviation."

The Vocational Village pilot project was launched in Gemawang, Jambu District, Semarang Regency, Central Java Province, which has a population of 3444 (1673 women and 1771 men). Of this population, around 20% are farmers who own their own land, 22% are farmers who do not

own their own land, 52% have an unidentified occupation (e.g. women working in the home, unofficial employment that is only partially paid) and 6% have other occupations, such as police officers, businesspeople, teachers or civil servants. Roughly 10% of the population in Gemawang have never attended school.

The original project lasted a total of three years. In the first year, 250 people joined the programme and, after the third year (2011) the programme was able to sustain itself. The village was consequently turned into a prototype that could be used for further research, apprenticeships, support, education and training for any institution with an interest in the village. Eventually, the model was replicated in 35 other districts across the province.

## Reasons for the development of a Vocational Village in 2009

The Vocational Village was part of a long-term government plan aimed at increasing adult access to life skills education.

The project, scheduled to be implemented from 2005 until 2009, had five main initiatives. One of these was the broadening of life skills education to involve non-formal education. The programme originally fell under the auspices of the Department of National Education (Depdiknas) and is currently supervised by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Another area targeted by the Department of National Education was the management, accountability and public image of training institutions, for which a comparative model of life skills education would be developed.

The Central Java province Governor Bikit Waluyo's policy regarding a vocational province needed to be synergised with both the government and citizens. The governor's slogan, "Come back to the village, build the village" (Bali Ndeso Mbangun Deso) referred to the need to shift the focus of development from cities to villages. Infrastructure is most often developed in cities, but there is an on-going need in Indonesia to

develop these facilities in villages, as well. The village aspects that were to be developed were human and natural resources, the environment, culture and society, and politics. It furthermore refers to the spread of knowledge, skills, technology and information from cities to villages such as Gemawang.

At the time, the unemployment rate for those less than 18 years of age on the island of Java was 9, 7%.

Although the farming sector had not been harmed by the Indonesian economic crisis of 1997, and had actually even created jobs, many rural areas were still lacking efficient use of available resources. Many villages remained poor, which led to much immigration from rural villages to cities. The Vocational Village Programme was piloted in Gemawang as a method of generating income in rural communities.

## Objectives

The aims of the Vocational Village Programme are:

- To foster skills and self-reliance
- To manage national resources without damaging the environment
- To create business groups based on local potential and skills
- To provide information, marketing networks and to help in the acquisition of a production license
- To become an independent organisational mechanism

## Recruitment of Facilitators

Three parties work together to ensure the smooth operation of the Vocational Village Programme: the Vocational Village Committee, the Programme Assistant and the facilitators. The committee is chosen by members of the community and the Programme Assistant must be a professional with experience in the field of vocational skills training. Programme facilitators are volunteers, business practitioners, institutions related to the specific vocational skills taught in the particular Vocational Village (e.g. farming, health, small business industry or tourism), or university lecturers, or teachers from

vocational schools or other academic institutions.

For the original Vocational Village in Gemawang, some facilitators were trained by the P2PNFI developers of the programme. However, most facilitators did not require training since they were recruited as experts in their fields of interest.

### Recruitment of Learners

Learners are from the local area where the Vocational Village is established. They are recruited by the Vocational Village Committee based on what they intend to do with the skills they would learn and which resources they have available.

### Teaching and Learning Methods

There were 14 different courses available at the Gemawang Vocational Village: batik painting (traditional cloth painting), sewing, fish farming, medicinal tree farming, website creation, coffee production (from planting beans to serving coffee), farm counselling, rabbit farming, indigo (a natural dye for batik) farming, fruit farming, entrepreneurship, business management, charcoal production and fertilizer production. Each course had a training design, a curriculum, a syllabus and learning materials, and consisted of 30 % theory and 70 % practical work. The curricula are developed by the committee in cooperation with experts in each area of skills training.

### IMPACT

To date, 35 villages have established Vocational Village Programmes and a total of 255 people have participated. As a result:

- 14 small business groups were created
- 3 microfinance institutions were created
- 19 institutions, both from governmental and non-governmental, willingly joined the Vocational Village Programme (e.g. the Titian Foundation and Yayasan Losari, a business that owns a hotel near Gemawang

and who joined the Vocational Village as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility initiative).

- The village of Gemawang became a vocational training model, not only for the Central Java Province, but also for the rest of Indonesia. Other villages visited Gemawang to learn how to manage their resources in order to empower their own community members.
- Gemawang became a research location for universities such as the State University of Semarang (UNNES), the Satya Wacana Christian University (UKSW), Brawijaya University (UNIBRAW), and the State University of Surabaya (UNESA).
- As a result of the success of the Vocational Village in Gemawang, the programme was implemented in 35 other villages. Most of these villages are in Central Java, but Vocational Villages have also been established in the provinces of Nusa Tenggara Barat, West Java and North Sumatra.

### LESSONS LEARNED

- The programme should be tailored to the specific needs of the learners, the resources available in their surrounding environment and the existing business hubs in their particular village.
- It is also important to involve community leaders in the implementation of the programme in order to motivate other community members to participate.
- Both governmental and non-governmental organisations should work together to support the entire community where the Vocational Village is based, instead of emphasising the importance of their own institutions.
- Cooperation between the institutions involved is crucial.

### MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Vocational Village Programme was monitored and evaluated by village developers from P2PNFI on a monthly basis from 2009 until 2011. Aspects such as curricula, programme facilities, learning kits, and learner and facilitator attendance were monitored. P2PNFI also monitored and evaluated the process of how

businesses were established by participants in the programme.

### SUSTAINABILITY

The Vocational Village received financial support from P2PNFI for the first two years of the programme (2009 – 2010) and, since 2011, the programme has been sustaining itself. Each district in Central Java has five Vocational Villages. Several factors led to the sustainability of the programme:

- Financial support from the P2PNFI in the beginning allowed for the original Vocational Village Programme to be designed and implemented.
- The development of every Vocational Village is dependent on strong involvement of community members from the beginning, when needs are assessed, until the evaluation at the end of the programme. It is important to ensure that community members have a sense of belonging and a psychological investment in the programme.
- High levels of commitment from learners are also crucial. This can be attained by continuous appraisal of their work and appreciation of their attendance.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the programme needs to be comprehensively and sustainably planned.

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### CONTACT

Heru Priambodo  
Centre of Early Childhood, Non-Formal and Informal Education  
Region 2 (PP PAUDNI) Regional II  
Jalan Diponegoro 250 Ungaran  
Semarang  
Email: heruprima@gmail.com or adekoesmiadi@yahoo.com

## NEPAL

# Community Learning Centres

### Implementing Organization

Ministry of Education and Sports (through the Non-Formal Education Centre, NFEC)

### Programme Partners

National Resource Centre for Non-formal Education (NRC-NFE); UNESCO; National Federation of UNESCO Associations of Japan (NFUAJ) and Rotary Matching Grant Fund

### Date of Inception

early 1990s

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Nepal is one of the least developed countries in the world, with an economy that is largely based on agricultural production. As a result, about a third of its population, mostly from rural and semi-urban communities, live in absolute poverty with limited access to basic amenities, livelihood and educational opportunities.

According to UNESCO, the total adult female and male literacy rates were 35% and 63%, respectively, between 1995 and 2005. As such, about half (51%) of Nepal's adult population still remains illiterate today despite impressive efforts to promote universal access to education in recent years. The high rate of illiteracy in the country, particularly among socially disadvantaged groups such as women, ethnic minorities (Janajatis) and low caste groups (Dalits) is largely ascribed to a combination of socioeconomic factors including poverty, socio-cultural practices which discriminate against women, minorities and low caste groups and the general lack of development in remote rural areas which prevents rural communities from accessing quality education.

Access to good quality formal education for the poor majority is further

impeded by a paucity of educational resources, poor infrastructure and a shortage of qualified teachers. It was in response to these challenges that the Ministry of Education and Sports (through the Non-Formal Education Centre, NFEC) with support from UNESCO, instituted the Community Learning Centres (CLCs) Programme in the 1990s in an effort to make education more accessible to all, as well as to promote development, social empowerment and transformation.

## THE COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRES (CLCS) PROGRAMME

### Definition of a CLC

According to UNESCO, a CLC is as a community-based non-formal educational institution or organisation which provides a range of services and learning opportunities to out-of-school children, youth and illiterate or semi-literate adults from socially disadvantaged rural and urban communities. The CLCs operate outside the formal education system and intend primarily to address the learners' basic literacy and educational needs and therefore support the holistic development of citizens and communities. As non-formal educational institutions, CLCs are usually established and managed by local communities with financial and technical support from various governmental and non-governmental agencies. Furthermore, their activities are also tailored according to the local context in order to address the local community's problems as well as to satisfy its basic needs.

### The CLC Programme in Nepal

Within Nepal, the concept of CLCs has its origins in the Seti Education for Rural Development (SERD) project,

an adult literacy or education and development programme which was initiated by UNESCO and UNICEF during the 1980s. Under the SERD project, about 154 village reading centres were established across the country to provide community-based post-literacy and continuing education training programmes. The village reading centre concept was later refined, revitalised and further broadened from a 'reading' centre to a 'community learning' centre following the introduction and implementation of the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP I, 1992–1998) by the Government of Nepal. The idea gained further momentum and ground in the late 1990s when the Government introduced the second phase of the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP II, 1999–2004) and established the National Committee on CLC. Following extensive consultations, the National Committee on CLC, an inter-agency board comprising of the National Resource Centre for Non-Formal Education (NRC-NFE) and UNESCO Kathmandu Office, established the NFEC to spearhead the CLC programme in Nepal.

The NFEC has since established more than 800 CLCs across the country with financial and technical support from UNESCO, through the Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL) programme, the National Federation of UNESCO Associations of Japan (NFUAJ) and Rotary Matching Grant Fund. Furthermore, the Nepali Government has also pledged to establish 205 CLCs as part of its tenth five-year plan (2002–2007), the aim being to establish a CLC in every village development committee and municipality in Nepal.

As in other countries, nearly all CLCs in Nepal were established and are being managed by the local people. Similarly, the CLC programme in

Nepal also targets out-of-school children, youth and adults from marginalised rural and urban communities. The implementation of the CLC programme is guided by the basic principle that the main purpose of education is, not only to enable people to read and write, but also to provide them with knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable self-reliance and to improve their living standards. Thus, the CLC programme in Nepal provides participants with skills training in:

- literacy (basic and functional literacy; continuing or lifelong education)
- early childhood education
- communication and social interaction skills training
- livelihood skills training and support to establish income generation activities/projects (in, for example, handicraft production, carpentry, bee keeping, goat keeping, poultry farming, horticulture and cash crop production) Image
- health (HIV/AIDS, maternal health, infant mortality, family planning, personal hygiene, sanitation, reproductive health and family nutrition)
- civic education (leadership training, human rights awareness, human security, democratic governance, conflict management and resolution, gender education including domestic violence, genital mutilation and rape)
- environmental management/conservation.

### Aims and objectives

The CLC programme endeavours to:

- promote literacy development and lifelong learning in order to combat illiteracy in the country
- foster cultural preservation and dissemination of local/indigenous knowledge and practices
- raise social awareness or promote individual and collective/community empowerment through lifelong education for all people in the community and the dissemination of relevant information and skills
- empower communities to solve their local problems
- promote gender equality
- promote local socioeconomic development and improvements in communities' quality of life through livelihood skills training and support

of community-based income generation activities

- promote individual and collective (community) development through lifelong education and learning in order to facilitate social empowerment and transformation
- create opportunities and forums for communities to discuss local problems and development needs.

- conduct and manage non-formal literacy and life skills training classes
- assess or evaluate learning outcomes.

To date, more than 400 facilitators, supervisors and organisers have undertaken the ToT programme.

### Programme monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the CLCs and its programmes are the joint responsibility of the NRC-NFE, UNESCO and the CLC management committees, with the latter being responsible for monitoring programme activities at the local level on an ongoing basis. The model set up for monitoring, supervision and evaluation includes a number of approaches: inter-CLC monitoring; group reflection; inter-CLC sharing; and joint team evaluation. Of these, the most extensive has been the evaluation of the programme conducted by UNESCO under the CapEFA Programme.

### Programme impact and challenges

#### Impact

The CLC programme has made some positive contributions towards community development, employment creation, poverty alleviation and social empowerment and transformation. The programme has successfully mobilised local resources and knowledge systems and used them to create sustainable learning and livelihood opportunities for groups of people in Nepal who are often marginalised. This has enabled children and youth to gain access to education and, eventually, to enrol (or re-enrol) in the formal education system.

Similarly, the programme has made a remarkable progress improving adult literacy rates, with a huge mass of rural people, especially women who are the backbone of the socioeconomic development within the community, having benefitted from the programme over the years. The programme has also equipped many

### Recruitment and training of facilitators

Generally, the CLCs in Nepal attract personnel with lower educational qualifications and professional capacity than those in the formal education system. In view of this, the NRC-NFE and the CLC management committees place greater emphasis on the training of instructors and teachers/facilitators in order to ensure the effective implementation of the programme. The Training of Trainers (ToT) programme is usually conducted by a mobile unit of experts from the local Ministry of Education office or from NGOs. During the ToT programme, practitioners are trained to:

- manage CLCs and network with other local organisations
- identify programme participants' learning needs
- identify the community's socioeconomic needs and problems
- design and develop locally-focused curriculum and learning materials

adults with relevant technical skills and supported them to establish a variety of income generating activities. These activities have progressively fostered positive human development and empowerment, poverty alleviation and improvements in community living standards. Essentially therefore, the programme has opened avenues for deprived, disadvantaged and marginalised people to learn to be creative, analytical and productive and also able to make their own choices and decisions. In addition, the programme has provided communities with a forum to meet and discuss their local problems and developmental needs, a process that has not only improved community members' awareness of their civic rights and responsibilities (social empowerment) but has also increased their participation in local developmental projects. Equally important, the programme has also precipitated a gradual change of attitudes among community members as manifested by the programme graduates' more proactive approach to tackling family poverty and improving their living standards.

## Challenges

Despite the above achievements, the CLC programme still faces numerous challenges, such as:

- the lack of resources (human, material and financial) necessary for the effective implementation of the programme.
- being dependent on volunteers who, because they are poorly paid, lack the strong motivation necessary for the effective execution of their duties
- weak links between CLCs with other developmental agencies engaged at the local level
- weak participation of community members in the planning, implementation and management of CLC activities
- inability of CLC programmes to address communities' long-term needs
- being dependent on external funding because poor local communities are unable to independently sustain them
- a lack of a well-defined national policy and/or a central agency to

guide and coordinate the CLC activities at a national level

- the manipulation of the CLC programme by politicians for political expediency, an aspect which has distorted the principles and activities of the programme.

## LESSONS LEARNED

It has become evident over the years that the effective and successful implementation of CLC programmes should be dependent on the formation of strong working networks between CLCs, governmental and non-governmental organisations. Furthermore, there is also need for capacity building to strengthen existing CLCs in order to ensure their sustainability. Similarly, as a community-based organisation, a CLC has to actively involve 'ordinary' community members in the planning and decision making regarding the content of activities in the centre.

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## CONTACT

The Director (Mr Satya Bahadur Shrestha)  
 Ministry of Education and Sports (NFEC)  
 Sanothimi, Bhaktapur  
 Website: <http://www.nfec.gov.np/index.php>  
 Email: [info@nfec.gov.np](mailto:info@nfec.gov.np)  
 Phone: 977-1-631288  
 Fax: 977-1-631280

## PHILIPPINES

# Community-based Adult Learning and Development Programme (CALDP)

### Implementing Organization

People's Initiative for Learning and Community Development (PILCD)

### Funding

dvv International

### Annual Programme Costs

USD 30 000

## OVERVIEW

The People's Initiative for Learning and Community Development (PILCD) is a national NGO that was established in 2002. It is now a member of national and regional literacy and education organizations such as the Civil Society for Education Reforms or E-net Philippines (a national coalition of NGOs for education reforms); the Asia South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education (ASPBAE); the Regional Literacy Coordinating Council of the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) and the NGO Consultative Assembly of the National Literacy Coordinating Council.

PILCD primarily endeavours to develop and implement alternative learning programmes for community development. To this end, it has been implementing the Community-based Adult Learning and Development Programme (CALDP), which is intended to institutionalise alternative learning for development at grassroots levels in an effort to enhance the capacity of local communities to address proactively the social, political and economic challenges afflicting them as well as to increase their standard of life.

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

While the literacy rate in the Philippines is high (over 90%), a Functional Literacy, Education and

Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS, 2003) revealed that about 3.8 million Filipinos aged 10 years and over were unable to read and write, while a further 9.2 million were functionally illiterate. The FLEMMS also noted that of the 34.2 million Filipinos aged between 6-24 years, 11.6 million were not attending school, of which 1.2 million were children of primary school age (6-11 years old), 1.0 million were of secondary school age (12-15 years old), and 9.4 million were in the tertiary age group (16-24 years old). In addition, the Family Income and Expenditure Survey (FEIS, 2003) indicated that about 44.5% of household heads had had elementary education at most, while a further 33.9% had reached secondary level and 21.6% had attended college with less than half earning a college degree. These data indicate that despite a progressive increase in national literacy rates over the years, some Filipinos, particularly poor people in urban slums and remote rural areas as well as indigenous populations, have limited opportunities to gain access to quality formal education. As a result, PILCD initiated the Community-based Adult Learning and Development Programme (CALDP) with the aim of addressing the learning and educational needs of these disadvantaged people.

## PROGRAMME

The Community-based Adult Learning and Development Programme (CALDP) is currently being implemented in three local municipalities in the Province of Benguet and the City of Baguio. The programme enrols between 150 and 200 adult and youth learners per year and has an annual budget of about USD 30 000. Due to the ethnic and linguistic diversity of the Philippines, the programme employs a multilingual approach to learning instruction and thus uses

regional languages, Filipino and English in order to enable learners to effectively comprehend the concepts being taught.

CALDP focuses primarily on four key areas:

- Basic and advanced literacy: Development and implementation of needs-oriented, context-based and innovative basic education programmes for adults and out-of-school children in marginalised communities and vulnerable groups. This is promoted through the use of in-house, modular and computer-based learning approaches.
- Capacity-building: Skills are enhanced through training in project development, vocational trades, rural development, leadership and management, governance, livelihood and income generation.
- Sustainable agriculture education: Continuing education programme for small farmers focusing on sustainable agriculture (including soil management, crop systems, and pest/disease management), leadership and entrepreneurship/business training.
- Lobbying and advocacy for the enhanced provision of community-based adult learning programmes.

## Aims and Objectives

The programme endeavours to:

- enhance the levels of functional literacy among marginalised and vulnerable individuals and social groups/communities;
- use literacy skills development as an instrument of poverty alleviation, sustainable community development and environmental protection;
- enhance the capacity of marginalised communities to engage in sustainable livelihood activities including agricultural production;



- promote community self-organization; and
- empower marginalised communities/people to participate actively in socio-political civic life.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

### Curriculum Design and Development

CALDP actively combines literacy skills training with sustainable development at both the individual and community levels. The design and development of the programme is based on the situational reality of the learners, but also incorporates aspects of broader national and global relevance. These realities serve as learning references to enable learners not only to face their problems but, most importantly, to proactively seek functional solutions to these challenges in a way that supports individual and community growth and development. As the programme is community-based, learners are furthermore consulted with regard to its design and development, and the results of these consultative engagements help to frame the programme curriculum.

### Recruitment and Training of Trainers

Programme facilitators are usually regular PILCD staff with university qualifications in education, psychology and sociology. Additional facilitators are hired according to need and should preferably have had a university education. The facilitators are provided with professional training by PILCD on adult learning theories, teaching and learning methods, lesson planning and development, and creative facilitation using the Activity-Discussion-Input-Deepening-Synthesis (ADIDS) approach which incorporates theatre skills and the visual arts. Each facilitator is trained to deal with between 25 and 30 learners.

Regular PILCD staff/facilitators receive a monthly salary which is provided for under the programme funding agreement. Additional facilitators hired according to need are paid an honorarium by the local partner government which is based on the hours or days served.

### Enrolment of Learners

PILCD, in partnership with community leaders, NGOs and local government officials, undertakes literacy and development sensitisation and advocacy campaigns to encourage target groups to enrol into the pro-

gramme. In order for the campaign to be effective and yield the intended results, PILCD engages community and local government officials through consultative meetings during which CALDP's goals and objectives are explained. In addition, PILCD also arranges campaign activities and orientation meetings with potential learners and other community members. A further incentive for prospective learners and their communities is that the programme is provided free of charge.

### Teaching/Learning Approaches and Methodologies

CALDP learning sessions are held on a regular but flexible basis based on an analysis of the participants' learning needs, levels of literacy, educational gaps and intended outcomes. These are identified through a series of pre-enrolment Functional Literacy Tests (FLT) and group-based activities. In addition, learners contribute towards establishing the learning calendar by choosing the days and times that best suit them. In the past, CALDP sessions have been held once or twice a week, or one week per month according to learners' availability.

To avoid facilitator-centred instruction, several teaching methods are used. These range from traditional lectures with multi-media



presentations to group-based activities, modular-based learning, field demonstrations, games and creative arts that take participants' different learning styles and contexts into account. However, particular emphasis is placed on action-based learning using the ADIDS model, whereby learners are encouraged to engage in simulated or real project activities that contribute to the overall development of the project. This "hands-on" approach is intended to empower learners and allow them to make their own discoveries. It has been used successfully in agricultural lessons with small farmers in Buduias, where PILCD has established an agricultural demonstration farm for practical lessons.

Furthermore, the programme provides learners with self-administered supplementary learning modules which they can use alone or in study groups during their spare time. Most modules are developed by PILCD based on the Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) learning modules provided by the Department of Education's Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS), while others are developed independently by NGOs.

Similarly, PILCD employs various strategies to motivate learners and their communities to participate in the programme. Apart from the advocacy campaigns and the provision

of free lessons, the CALDP also offers developmental literacy training in a number of areas such as: basic and advanced literacy; computer literacy; music and art workshops; cultural activities; life skills; and livelihood and income generation training, particularly in agricultural production. This is intended to cater effectively to learners' diverse interests; for example, adult males are more inclined to join agricultural classes, whereas youth tends to enrol in basic education and literacy classes.

CALDP learners receive further motivation to pursue their studies due to the possibility offered to them of taking the A&E test administered each year by the Department of Education's Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS). Participants who pass this test are awarded high school graduation certificates by the Department of Education, which enable them to continue to higher education or seek formal employment at a similar level to formal school graduates.

### PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

Facilitators are obliged to evaluate the programme on an ongoing basis through end-of-session tests. Longer

tests are also taken in order to enable the evaluation of long-term learning outcomes as well as to prepare learners for the A&E tests.

In addition, learners also evaluate the programme by means of a learning feedback diary (LFD) which is principally an essay detailing the learning experiences, and suggesting ways of improving the programme.

However, the programme has still to be evaluated by independent external examiners.

#### Impact and Achievements

The CALDP has been applauded for advancing the inter-twined goals of literacy skills training and community development. The following lists its key impacts and achievements:

Primarily, the programme provides adults and youth in remote and poor rural communities – the majority of whom have limited or no experience of education – with alternative learning opportunities to enhance their literacy skills. Most of the programme participants are now able to read and write, as well as to plan and organise their livelihood activities. Most importantly, since 2004, a total of 189 CALDP graduates learners have passed the national A&E test and have now completed their high school education. Others



have managed to secure formal employment.

The programme has had a significant impact on communities, particularly in terms of poverty alleviation, economic empowerment and the improvement of quality of life. For example, members of a women's organization who participated in the programme were subsequently able to install a community water system in Bayoyo village, while a mothers' organization in Taba-ao established a hog project. These livelihood and income generation activities have raised community standards of life. Both projects are a by-product of an ongoing learning programme on literacy and capacity building. The organizations' members and officers received training in leadership, organizational and project development skills during twice-monthly sessions. The development of the two community projects involved the participants in the entire process of project development.

The agricultural training programme that was initiated in 2003 has enabled some farmers to adopt and utilise sustainable farming practices, such as the use of organic fertilisers and appropriate strategies for managing pests and diseases. For example, two farmers from Buguias have converted to organic farming. Both are now marketing their organic

vegetable produce, an outcome that has improved their standards of life.

Graduates' ability to do so encourages other learners to join literacy programmes.

### LESSONS LEARNED

Coordination and cooperation with government departments and NGOs involved in community development activities facilitates the implementation and success of community-based literacy and development projects.

The integration of literacy with developmental skills training increases the capacity of learners to engage in self-help and collective socio-economic activities, such as managing income-generating projects and initiating community actions that address common challenges. Hence, literacy training paves the way for greater individual participation in processes of community development.

In order to be effective, community-based literacy and development programmes must be developed and implemented in such a way as to avoid alienating learners from their contexts: i.e. context-specific realities and needs must be taken into account. It is therefore imperative to consult and implicate the community at all levels of the programme's evolution. Furthermore, literacy training should train learners to find functional solutions to the challenges they face in their everyday lives.

### SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability of the programme is being ensured through intensive lobbying and advocacy campaigns within the communities that raises community awareness of the importance of education and encourages people to enrol in the programme. Similar efforts are being made to encourage national and local government units to institutionalise literacy and adult education programmes within their development plans. In addition, PILCD is establishing partnerships with governmental and non-governmental institutions in order to secure reliable sources of additional project funding. Partnerships like this have enabled PILCD to expand CALDP to other communities.

### CONTACT

Ramon G. Mapa  
Executive Director  
247 Lower Ferguson, Central Guisad,  
2600 Baguio City, Philippines  
Phone/Fax: (63974) 3005038  
E-mail: pilcd@skyinet.net; pilcd.org@gmail.com; maparamon@gmail.com

## UZBEKISTAN

# Community Learning Centres

## Implementing Organization

National Commission for UNESCO in Tashkent

## Language of Instruction

Local languages

## Programme Partners

Ministry of Public Education, local authorities and NGOs

## Date of Inception

1999

## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

With a population of approximately 27,191,000 people, Uzbekistan is the most populated country of the Central Asia sub-region. 60 per cent of this population reside in rural areas and are typically occupied in rural primary industries, although this number has declined significantly in the past two decades in response to a shift in Uzbekistan's industry focus. The independence of Uzbekistan in 1991, allowed the country greater flexibility in developing new branches of industry. Since then, the traditional focus on cotton-dominated primary industry is being gradually shadowed by the emergence of industries in oil, gas and production, such as the production of automobiles. Consequently, the significant economic misfortunes of the country that were prevalent during its pre-independence years have been largely transformed, and in 2000 Uzbekistan's GDP was up 4.2 per cent, largely due to an 8.5 per cent increase in manufacturing. Uzbekistan's economic turnaround coincided with large improvements in social and economic indicators, as well as an education reform.

In 1997, Uzbekistan enacted a Law on Education that would reform the country's educational framework, and set a realistic framework for lifelong learning that would ensure contin-

uous education for the population.

National education is now run through two ministries, the Ministry of Public Education, and the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education, which deals exclusively with professional and higher education. The Ministry of Public Education is responsible for delivering education through three mechanisms:

**Formal education:** This sector provides formal schooling, from pre-school to advanced further education. In Uzbekistan there are currently more than ten thousand general secondary schools, 63 higher education and 539 technical vocational institutions. The formal education sector also includes the assessment and awarding of all state-accredited qualifications. Through the formal education sector, Uzbekistan has already reached its Millennium Development Goal for universal access to primary education, and reports literacy rates of nearly 100 per cent.

**Non-formal learning and education:** Through educational establishments that are not connected with formal adult education, non-formal education provides retraining or upgrading of vocational skills. This may include a wide range of levels from training in basic literacy, to advanced application of ICT in enterprise. The role of non-formal learning may be simply conceptualised as learning to apply literacy and contents of formal education to the development of vocational skills that may assist in personal development.

**Informal learning:** Uzbekistan has identified informal learning as the mechanism in which people continuously learn under their own initiative. This includes personal study assisted by national publications as well as indirectly educational programmes broadcast and distributed by the mass-media.

Amidst the development of a knowledge and information society, non-formal and informal learning opportunities are in increasing demand in Uzbekistan, as many people from traditional disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds are beginning to understand the benefits of continuous education for the development of themselves, their families and their communities. In 1999, the establishment of Community Learning Centres began, with an aim to satisfy these demands.

## THE COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRES (CLC)

According to UNESCO, a CLC is as a community-based non-formal educational institution or organisation which provides a range of services and learning opportunities to out-of-school children, youth and illiterate or semi-literate adults from socially disadvantaged rural and urban communities. The CLCs operate outside the formal education system and intend primarily to address the learners' basic literacy and educational needs and therefore support the holistic development of citizens and communities. As non-formal educational institutions, CLCs are usually established and managed by local communities with financial and technical support from various governmental and non-governmental agencies. Furthermore, their activities are also tailored according to the local context in order to address the local community's problems as well as to satisfy its basic needs.

The introduction of lifelong learning in Uzbekistan was marked with the establishment of ten Community Learning Centres, a project supported by UNESCO within the framework of the Asia-Pacific Programme Education for All (APEAL). Each one of these UNESCO sponsored CLCs is located in a different province, typically in

disadvantaged areas, and is normally complimented by a large number of small-scale satellite CLCs, established by communities, local authorities or NGOs. There are currently 10,750 such organisations in Uzbekistan, although these organisations are self-proclaimed, and the vast majority are limited to educational consultation services and the promotion of larger CLC activities. Since most of the country's population lives in rural and remote areas, it is important for the CLCs to have a large presence in rural areas, and this is partially achieved through this satellite structure.

CLC educational programmes are focused entirely on the skills needed by the people of the community in which it serves; these may be literacy and numeracy skills, or they may be more vocational skills. These programmes are directed towards the acquisition of knowledge that will lead to quality of life improvements and the development of vocational capacity. Over the past decade, since the establishment of CLCs, educational programmes have been continuously evolving according to the social needs of the community, who are typically encouraged to devise and follow their own training programme curriculums. Typical activities of CLCs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- child preparation for elementary school;
- foreign languages;
- literacy (transition process from Cyrillic to Latin alphabet);
- ICT programmes, ranging from basic skills to applications for enterprise;
- health education, including reproductive health, disease prevention and nutrition;
- early childhood care and education;
- ecological programmes;
- vocational skills training;
- income generating projects;
- cultural programmes;
- sports and recreational activities;
- provision of resource centres and libraries.

CLC activities will be described in further detail later in this case study.

## Aims and Objectives

Since Community Learning Centres fall under Uzbekistan's non-formal education sector, it is relevant to note the primary objectives of non-formal education:

- to support the development of personal self-confidence and the development of personal and community capacities;
- to help people understand relations between themselves, their neighbours and the world, arising from diverse cultural identities amidst a continuously accelerating globalisation process;
- to support the formation of an individual's co-responsibility for his or her own community and for society as a whole.

Community Learning Centres are established primarily to help to deliver the first of these objectives. Some of the specific aims of CLCs are to:

- provide opportunities for individuals to acquire knowledge and skills through structured activities in non-formal learning environments;
- link literacy with life opportunities and skills;
- involve all members of the community in participation of programmes and decision making;
- promote dialogue within the community and between community members and local authorities;
- develop partnership links with potential national and international stakeholders;
- mobilise efforts toward alleviating the poverty situation in neglected areas.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

### Organisational Arrangements

Each CLC is headed by a director and a deputy-director, who consult with the CLC planning committee twice a year. A wide selection of people from the educational ministries, NGOs, local authorities and the communities are invited to participate in these planning committees, in which

the majority of the discussion and decision making process of the CLC are carried out. This includes forward planning for CLC programmes and activities, personnel management, resource management and the development of financial resources.

Within the CLC personnel structure, the deputy director acts as programme coordinator. Within each programme, the instruction is headed by a specialist in the relevant field, who is supported by qualified teachers, who are again supported by volunteers.

CLCs are supported by a central CLC Resource Centre in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan. This resource centre coordinates CLC activities nationally, and provides materials such as publications for common teaching programmes. For assistance with financial and tangible resources, most CLCs have established relationships with local NGOs, universities, healthcare providers and small or medium enterprises, who are sometimes able to provide the CLC with money, expert teaching staff, specialist equipment and other services. More funds are sourced through income generation projects such as the sale of products, cultural shows or services.

## Recruitment and Training of Facilitators

The CLCs three main levels of recruitment are for programme specialists, general teaching staff, and volunteers. Programme specialists are normally approached by the CLC, and are paid on a part time basis. For example, for an environmental programme, the CLC may seek an expert such as a local NGO project coordinator or a university lecturer. General teaching facilitators are also offered part time wages, and are recruited primarily from other educational establishments. Most also have jobs in the formal education sector, or are retired teachers from this sector. All of these instructors hold teaching qualifications. Volunteers are welcomed from any sector, including university students, workers in the enterprise and healthcare sectors, and general members of the community.

Training of staff is considered a key element of CLC resource building; general teaching facilitators and volunteers are encouraged to attend training workshops and seminars organised by the CLC Resource Centre in Tashkent, the education ministries, UNESCO and other local NGOs. Examples of such training workshops include:

- New educational technologies.
- Innovative educational approach to CLC strategy and community development for the staff and management of CLC.
- New pedagogical technologies in formal and non-formal education.
- Development of preventative and reproductive non-formal education for youths, adults, women and parents.
- Small scale enterprise.
- Training to complement the facilitator handbook.
- Utilization of ICT in CLCs
- ICT application for community empowerment.

### Mobilisation of Participants

The CLC delivers programmes based entirely on the needs of the local people. Specific teaching methods therefore vary widely according to the programme being taught and the preferred teaching methods of the participating expert. In general, learners are encouraged to specify their own learning goals and plan, and so instruction normally involves a mixture of group work and individual instruction. Some examples of CLC activities follow.

- Health education on reproduction and family planning, drug abuse, HIV and AIDS: CLCs in Khorezm and Samarkand provinces, where there is a relatively high rate of HIV infection, employ experts from local healthcare providers to design training programmes on these important issues. Learners are encouraged to diffuse their acquired knowledge throughout the community.
- Environmental education: Environmental or ecological programmes have been operating in CLCs in Khorezm, Nukus and Samarkand provinces. These programmes are selected because of their relevance to the local people. For example, Nukus province

is part of the northern Karakalpakstan Republic region, in which half of the Aral Sea lies. The Aral Sea, which was once the fourth largest lake in the world is being described as one of the earth's worst environmental disasters, shrinking to just 10 per cent of its original size over the past decades. A large number of environmental international NGOs are working in the area, and experts assist in providing the CLC with educational programmes for children and adults that explain the environmental phenomenon, and address methods of societal adaptation that are already required in order to mitigate the disaster's substantial hazards to health, livelihoods and industry.

■ Cultural heritage programmes: Many of the major CLCs run cultural heritage programmes, as a means to connect communities with each other and with their histories. This is also seen as a key programme for efforts in the integration of immigrant minorities.

■ Income generation projects: CLCs in Bukhara and Namangan provinces have delivered income generation projects, in which participants have developed skills in a certain marketable industry, such as weaving, and then found mechanisms to sell their work through the CLC. The programme in Namangan province was combined with a Small Scale Enterprise for Women programme, in which the women in the group formed a small scale enterprise, and learned about the relevant management and administration skills, alongside the development of their production skills.

■ ICT skills development: Most CLCs offer programmes in ICT skills. These range from basic ICT uses, to advanced website development, according to the needs of the local community.

■ Parental education and early childhood development: The CLC in Izboskan, a very populated area where health indicators for children remain relatively poor, combines a programme in parental education for childhood development with a child healthcare clinic service, operated in cooperation with local health-based NGOs.

■ Work orientated skills: Due to the high population density, and there are a wide range of employment sectors available for people with relevant

skills. However, many people are still excluded, particularly women, as they have not had the opportunities in formal education to develop sufficient skills. The Izboskan CLC provides a programme that familiarizes learners with a wide range of work orientated skills, such as ICT use, administration and critical thinking, in order to make learners from disadvantaged backgrounds more employable.

■ Sport competitions: Learners in Izboskan province requested programmes that might restore a sense of community to their densely populated region. The CLC created a series of sports training sessions and competitions in order to address this.

### PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is conducted at local and national level. At local level, each CLC planning committee meets twice a year to discuss the relative successes of the previous period, and to plan for the future. These evaluations are based on feedback from teaching staff, learners and other community members.

On a national level, the CLC Resource Centre in Tashkent conducts its own evaluations and reports to the Ministry of Public Education. These assessments cover the following areas:

- Learning achievements.
- Contents and structure of programmes.
- Qualifications of teaching staff.
- Integration of education and production.
- Management of the training process.
- Development of markets for educational services.
- Application of ICT in the CLC administration.
- Availability and use of material and technical resources.
- Availability and use of financial resources.
- Local and national partnerships.

In addition, some CLCs have more specific evaluation agreements with

private donor organisations, whose continued funding of CLC activities depend on positive evaluation results.

## Impact

The following positive impacts of Community Learning Centres have been identified:

- In rural areas, CLCs have become centres of culture and community activity due to their innovative activity.
- CLCs are considered to be places where communities are solving their problems and planning their development. The centres provide an excellent community forum for meeting, discussing and exhibiting ideas.
- CLCs have led to the diversification of rural industries, as people living in remote areas have had the opportunities to develop professional skills in various employment sectors. This is a very important outcome in a country where 60 per cent of the population reside in rural areas.
- Shifts from centralised to largely decentralised decision making processes, in community development, have been observed. This is largely credited to the community engagement methods of CLCs.
- Public awareness of the importance of lifelong learning is increasing.
- The capabilities of communities to face the challenges of development are improving.
- A great range of personal benefits have been observed, including improvements in health and living standards as well as greater confidence from those who have been empowered to participate more in community processes.

## Challenges

CLCs in Uzbekistan have faced the following challenges:

A shortage of financial and material resources continues to threaten programme quality and potential expansion.

There is a great lack of methodological literature and didactic materials for trainers and trainees.

The development of legislative support for the non-formal education sector has been insufficient, particularly in efforts to make certificates obtained in CLC courses nationally recognised qualifications.

There is insufficient public awareness of the role of CLCs and the activities available.

Networking between CLCs is slow due to communication constraints, normally as a cause of poor or lack of internet connectivity due to poor infrastructure, and it is therefore difficult to share knowledge and experience.

## SUSTAINABILITY

To ensure project sustainability, CLCs will focus their efforts on developing more partnerships with other organisations that may be able to supply assistance through material or financial donations, through the provision of staff or through advice.

In particular, proceeds from extended fund raising will be concentrated into upgrading ICT technologies, such as internet access, and creating and distributing more publications to assist trainers and learners with their programme studies.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The following lessons, and future plans for CLCs in Uzbekistan have been identified:

- In order to ensure relevancy of programmes, the educational courses should be of a standard that is high enough for the learner to achieve qualifications with national recognition.
- New CLCs should be opened in co-operation with secondary education establishments, in cooperation with the Ministry of Higher Education, in order to broaden delivery areas and target populations.
- Local and national governments should promulgate legislation to support CLCs and to give their certificates accreditation.
- Alongside training seminars and workshops, facilitators should be

encouraged to continue to upgrade their teaching qualifications regularly.

- Every CLC should be connected to the internet.
- Materials and resources to support programmes should be produced and supplied on a systematic, rather than an ad-hoc basis.
- Efforts should be made to engage more members of the community, and therefore to expand the available programme of activities.
- Educational activities should be coordinated with the educational policies of regional and local governmental bodies.
- CLCs should focus on the regular acquisition of new information on pedagogical techniques.
- The Ministry of Public Education should explore the potential for a CLC mobile training team, equipped with modern techniques, methodologies and learning materials.

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## CONTACT

Uzbekistan National Commission for UNESCO  
54, Buyuk Ipak Yuli Street, Tashkent 700077  
Phone: 998-712-670542  
Fax: 998-712-670538  
E-mail: unesco@natcom.org.uz

## VIET NAM

# Community Learning Centres – An Active Tool in National Literacy and Post-Literacy

## Implementing Organization

Continuing Education Department, Ministry of Education and Training

## Language of Instruction

Vietnamese (Kinh) and a number of minority languages, including Nung, Tay, Khmer, H'mong, Ede and Dao

## Funding

Vietnamese government, international NGOs

## Programme Partners

Main partners are the Ministry of Education and Training and UNESCO Hanoi. Other partners include the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism, the Vietnam Association for Promoting Education, Vietnam's National Fatherland Front, the People Mobilization Division of the Border Guard Command, the Women's Union, the Youth Union and the Farmers' Union.

## Annual Programme Costs

120,000,000,000 Vietnamese Dong or VND (around USD 5,700,000)

## Annual programme cost per learner

1,050,000 VND (around USD 50)

## Date of Inception

2009

## COUNTRY CONTEXT

Vietnam has made substantial progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and has been successful in eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, and in securing gender equality in educational enrolment. Female participants now make up 50% of enrolments in both primary and secondary education. Despite this progress, gender inequality remains a major issue.

Women from ethnic-minority groups living in rural communities or with migrant status are particularly likely to be disadvantaged. Ethnic-minority women living in rural communities are over-represented among the poor, for example, while the gender gap in education persists within ethnic minority communities. Women in Vietnam also have poorer access to health services than men and continue to be victims of gender-based violence. Female workers tend to earn less than men and are less likely to receive vocational training (World Bank, 2011).

The Vietnamese government recognizes that adult literacy and gender equality, especially among ethnic minorities, need further improvement. Its five-year plan for socio-economic development in the country acknowledges that improving the living standards of ethnic minorities is necessary in order to promote further development within Vietnam. The Community Learning Centres – An Active Tool in National Literacy and Post-Literacy programme fits well into this context as a large-scale government-run programme that aims to alleviate poverty among the rural poor and to promote gender equality (World Bank, 2014).

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The programme was launched in 2009 by the Vietnamese Continuing Education Department. The main goal is to promote adult literacy and reduce poverty among ethnic minorities living in remote regions of Vietnam. In addition to community development, the programme also strives to empower women and to promote gender equality. It aims to raise the status of women in communities to help them protect themselves against domestic violence,

rape and social discrimination. It consists of five grades, each of which takes learners three months to complete. Topics taught include reading, writing, arithmetic, society, science, agriculture, environmental protection, human rights, gender equality, and parenting.

The programme is currently implemented nationwide in 10,815 communities in 63 provinces. Every year the programme reaches around 26,500 participants in literacy classes and some 21,300 participants in post-literacy classes. From its inception in 2009 to 2013, 238,942 learners participated in the programme.

## Aims and Objectives

The programme has two sets of objectives related to different timelines. The first set of objectives, which programme implementers want to achieve by the end of 2015, are to:

- Increase the national adult literacy rate to 96%;
- Increase the adult literacy rate among ethnic-minority groups to 86%; and
- Promote and sustain the development of community learning centres in Vietnamese communities, with a particular focus on remote mountainous areas.

The next set of objectives, for 2020, are to:

- Increase the national adult literacy rate to 98%;
- Increase the adult literacy rate among ethnic minority groups to 90%; and
- Continue establishing CLCs in remote communities in Vietnam.



In addition to improving literacy rates, the programme aims to promote community development by reducing poverty levels and contributing to the eradication of hunger. To reach these goals, programme implementers teach communities about agriculture, nature, science and technologies in order to raise their standard of living and to empower them to address and solve the challenges they face. Additionally, the programme aims to empower women and to promote the languages of ethnic minorities through reading and writing classes. These classes are held in the Nung, Tay, Khmer, H'mong and Ede languages.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

## Teaching and Learning: Approaches and Methodologies

The programme, in the main, targets adults, specifically women and minority groups. However, the courses are

open to all members of a community regardless of age, gender or religion. The first step in implementation is to determine the learning needs of a community. Here, the programme relies on a tailored approach that aims to reflect, as much as possible, the needs of the community. In the beginning, facilitators of a local community learning centre (CLC) talk to community members and encourage them to participate in the literacy courses. This activity takes place in coordination with local women's unions, youth unions, heads of villages, local schools and the Department of Education and Training (DOET). Programme implementers also organize events, such as literacy days, to raise awareness of the programme. The next step is to survey the local population to evaluate existing levels of literacy within the community. Besides evaluating participants' reading and writing levels, the surveys also assess the learning needs and aspirations of respondents. CLC managers and DOET employees then analyze the surveys and develop a tailored learning plan for each community. When designing these

learning plans, implementers take the number, gender, age and the religious and ethnic background of learners into consideration. In general, teachers have the freedom to adjust the teaching content and methods to suit the specific needs and situations of learners.

The teaching approach adopted by the programme tries to involve participants actively in the learning process. Facilitators employ literacy teaching methodologies that promote critical thinking and independence. For example, one of the methodologies used is REFLECT (Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques). In addition, facilitators use traditional Vietnamese literacy teaching methods whereby students listen to and imitate the teacher. Facilitators do not want to lecture to participants, but seek rather to actively engage them in the learning process. They facilitate discussion among learners as to how best to address and solve local problems. This helps develop analytical skills and critical thinking, as well as developing

life and literacy skills. Literacy and post-literacy classes can also take the form of on-the-job training. For example, facilitators organize classes on fertilizer application techniques outside in the fields.

### Programme Structure and Process

The programme is split into five grades. Completing one grade usually takes around three months. Therefore, completing the entire literacy and post-literacy programme takes 15 months. The average number of learners per group is between 20 and 30. If there are not enough learners to fill all the places at one grade, facilitators will usually arrange multi-grade classes. Literacy training sometimes also takes place on an individual basis.

The literacy programme is divided into literacy and post-literacy phases. The literacy phase lasts from grade one to grade three, while the post-literacy phase takes place in grades four and five of the programme. The curriculum is designed progressively to move learners from being able to read and write to acquiring life skills. After completing the programme, learners have the possibility of going on to further education. In line with the tailored approach of the Vietnamese CLC programme, the curriculum is adapted to the socio-economic background of learners and to the needs of the local community. For example, in communities with high traffic accident rates, participants learn about traffic laws and ways to protect themselves from traffic accidents. The teaching materials are literacy and primary education textbooks. The Continuing Education Department (CED) was responsible for developing the textbooks, which were approved by the MOET. Other learning materials are sometimes jointly developed by local DOETs, partner organizations, programme facilitators and heads of villages. One example is the manual about cow farming techniques developed by Hoa Binh DOET and Action Aid. Another is a textbook on pig farming developed by Hoa Binh DOET and UNESCO Hanoi. Programme facilitators use statistical software called 'Education Statistic-Combat Illiteracy' (see <http://pcgd.moit.gov.vn>)

and CLC management software (<http://clc-mis.edu.vn>) to administer the programme. Both databases are accessible to the public and provide information on literacy arranged by gender, age, year, and region as well as by the number of CLCs. Facilitators use computers with internet access to conduct classes on agriculture and science.

Using the available textbooks, facilitators teach the following subjects: Vietnamese, mathematics, society and nature, science, and history and geography. Courses aimed particularly at women and minority groups include the following: human rights, gender equality, health (specifically preventive health, HIV/AIDS, nutrition and hygiene) and parenting. Other topics covered by the programme are environmental protection, sustainable agriculture and economics.

### Facilitators

Facilitators need to have at least a high-school degree. There are between 20 and 25 learners to each facilitator. Full-time and part-time employees are mainly primary school teachers and border guard personnel from the People Mobilization Division of the Border Guard Command. In addition, union members, retirees and university students also support teaching. They receive salaries and are compensated for any overtime they work. Some facilitators are unpaid volunteers. These are mainly university students and students from boarding schools for ethnic minorities. All facilitators receive a course of training before they start teaching. The content of their training includes literacy, post-literacy and adult teaching methodologies. They are also trained in the programme curriculum, as well as in its monitoring and evaluation. The CED provides training at the national level, while local DOETs also provide courses at the local level.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation process consists of several components. First, every community that runs a CLC establishes an organizing committee to monitor the implementation

of the programme. These committees evaluate awareness-raising, participant mobilization, organization and teaching components. Second, local DOETs conduct quarterly reports on programme implementation. Twice a year, in May and November, the DOETs send reports to the CED which then collects and analyzes the data. To supplement these reports, CED employees conduct field visits to CLCs to understand how implementation looks on the ground. In June each year, the data is presented and discussed at a meeting of CED specialists and the board of directors. At the end of the meeting, CLCs who fared particularly well receive awards, while CLCs that need improvement are notified.

Local DOETs also assess the outcome of the CLC programme by examining achievements and lessons learned during the year. Every two years, workshops take place at central, provincial and district levels to review past experiences and implement changes. CLCs also keep track of the number of people who complete the literacy phase and those who go on to the post-literacy phase.

### Accreditation Mechanisms

After completing the literacy phase (grades one to three), participants take a test. After passing this test, learners are eligible to continue with the post-literacy phase (grades four to five) of the programme. Upon completion of all five grades, learners take a final test supervised by the local DOET. The test results determine whether participants are eligible to pursue further secondary education. The test assesses the capacity of participants to read and write. In addition, their maths ability and their knowledge of nature, science, society and human rights are tested.

### IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

#### Impact and Achievements

Out of the more than 130,000 literacy learners who have taken part in the programme, 82% were women. Similarly, 80% of the 106,000-plus post-literacy learners were women. In

general, slightly more than four-fifths of learners (81%) who pass the literacy phase continue with the post-literacy phase. The substantial number of programme participants contributes to improving literacy rates in Vietnam. The proportion of illiterate people in the population fell from 6% in 2009 to 1.75% in 2013. The illiteracy rate among ethnic minorities dropped from 22.87% in 2004 to 5.6% in 2013. The education gender gap also seems to have narrowed, with the number of illiterate women exceeding the number of illiterate men by around 0.75% in 2013.

In addition to improving literacy rates, the programme also helped individuals improve their life and social skills. It reduces hunger by teaching participants how to best use fertilizers, how to raise livestock and how to use environmental resources responsibly. Participants also learn how to generate income and improve their living conditions. The programme therefore also played a part in reducing the nationwide percentage of poor households to 7.6% in 2013, down from 11.4% in 2009.

With regard to female empowerment, the programme managed to improve the status of women within their communities. According to figures released by the General Statistics Office of Vietnam, incidences of domestic violence were reduced by around 50%, from 12,527 reported cases in 2009 to 5,164 reported cases in 2013. The programme also induced women to take on more active roles in their communities.

One feature that drives the successful implementation of a CLC programme is that the local CLC manager is usually also the head of the village. This helps to tailor the programme to the needs of the community and promotes engagement among the local population.

## Challenges and Sustainability

One challenge of the programme is to ensure that facilitators have the capability to teach adult literacy programmes. For example, facilitators sometimes need to know minority languages and they need to be able to understand and relate to learners

from different social and economic backgrounds. Another challenge is limited funding from government, which can make it difficult to provide support to participants while they are taking the programme, for example by providing them with goods such as rice and clothing. Another challenge concerns the attitude of people in rural communities to education. Typically, they attach less importance to it, a factor which, together with bad weather and poor infrastructure, can make it difficult to engage people to participate in the programme.

Political and financial support from the Vietnamese government ensures the sustainability of the programme. Furthermore, local governments also support the programme by providing the infrastructure and assistance needed to implement it. The programme's sustainability is also supported by donor organizations such as the World Bank, UNESCO and World Vision.

## LESSONS LEARNED

One issue programme implementers have to face is that participants' literacy skills sometimes diminish over time. This is especially true of participants who opt not to complete the post-literacy phase. Facilitators attribute this to the traditional teaching method whereby participants passively learn literacy skills by imitating the teacher. To solve this problem, the teaching method is slowly changing to more actively involve learners in the teaching process. In addition, programme implementers realized that simply teaching participants how to write, read and count is insufficient to enable learners to remember the learning content. As a result, facilitators have started to put more emphasis on teaching learners how to apply the skills in their everyday life and income-generating activities.

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## CONTACT

Tong Lien Anh  
Specialist, Continuing Education Department, Ministry of Education and Training  
49 Dai Co Viet Street, Hai Bà Trưng District, Hanoi City, Vietnam  
Telephone/Fax: (+84) 988 867 866  
Email: tlanh@moet.edu.vn  
Website: <http://www.moet.gov.vn>

## SLOVENIA

# Challenges of the Countryside – A Rural Literacy Programme for Adults in Slovenia

## Implementing Organization

Ljudska univerza Velenje (Adult Education Centre Velenje), a non-profit education and training provider for young people and adults in Slovenia.

## Language of Instruction

Slovene

## Programme Partners

Andragoški center Slovenije (Slovenian Institute for Adult Education), and Kmetijsko gozdarska zbornica Slovenije (Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry of Slovenia). Funding: Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, the European Social Fund and the Employment Service of Slovenia.

## Annual Programme Costs

8,500 EUR

## Date of Inception

2005

## COUNTRY CONTEXT

The 1998 International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) found that more than three-quarters (77%) of the Slovenian population performed at below the international average for literacy skills. The results of the study – the first-ever national survey of adult literacy in Slovenia – caused shock waves among Slovenian politicians. The government's response was strongly centralized, increasing public funding, introducing new laws to promote adult education and establishing new educational goals, to be achieved by 2020. These included a 19% participation rate in lifelong learning among people aged between 25 and 64, and an 8% participation rate in non-formal general education. The government also aimed to ensure that half of adults who had not attained elementary school-level qualifications

reached that level by 2020 and that 65% of the population aged 25–64 had at least four years of upper-secondary education (Adult Education Master Plan 2014–2020).

In 2013 12.4% of Slovenes participated in adult learning. The proportion had fallen since 2010 when 16.2% participated – a drop attributable to the difficult economic environment (Education and Training Monitor, 2014). Nevertheless, only four countries in the EU ranked higher: Sweden, Denmark, Finland and the Netherlands (UIL, 2013: 112). The improvement was possible because of funding from the European Social Fund, active employment policies subsidising the education of unemployed people, and initiatives such as the Agency for Education of Employees, which was established in 2009. The latter is a training fund run by regional chambers of commerce which requires members to contribute one per cent of their income for training their employees. Despite initiatives of this sort, private funding has decreased, with the take-up of adult learning by individuals and companies continuing to depend largely on whether or not the courses are funded in full by the government.

One problem with taking a centralized approach is that success depends to a large extent on the strength of local and regional capacity. Only 12 out of 212 communities in Slovenia adopted annual adult education programmes, and many local communities had neither the financial capacity nor the personnel to provide access to non-formal primary education without substantial state support (UIL, 2013: 72).

Rural parts of Slovenia are the least developed in terms of literacy proficiency. This means that people living in rural communities are less

able to participate in social activities or progress in the labour market.

Ljudska univerza Velenje, with the support of the the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE), developed its rural literacy programme in order to provide these communities with training in literacy and sustainable development. Teachers on the programme are trained by the SIAE to support locals in finding and taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the environment they live in, with a view, ultimately, to improving their social and economic situation.

The SIAE is the main national institution for research and development, quality improvement, guidance and validation, and promotional and informative activity in the field of adult education in Slovenia. It drafts professional guidelines and evaluations, monitors the development of the adult education system, develops various non-formal and formal types of learning, and develops programmes to improve adult literacy, paying particular attention to improving the access of vulnerable groups of adults to education and learning.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Challenges of the Countryside, a rural literacy programme for adults in Slovenia, was developed by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education in 2005 in response to the adult literacy problems highlighted in the IALS survey and an assessment of the educational needs of adults in the Slovenian countryside drawn from the 2005 research project, Development of the educational model for literacy development and sustainable development of the rural areas in Slovenia. The research revealed that a large proportion of the rural population in Slovenia lack the skills necessary for active participation in society and



the labour market (only 10% have functional literacy skills, while 42% have completed only primary-level education). Surprisingly, in light of these problems, more than 70 per cent of adults surveyed remained motivated to take up further learning opportunities, perhaps because of the high rate of unemployment in rural areas. The research also found that while there is an appetite for learning there are not enough learning opportunities and appropriate learning programmes for this group of adults.

The research highlighted a number of features characteristic of the target group:

- Negative previous experiences of schooling, and poor general knowledge;
- Poor communication skills, and weak selection of information;
- Low estimation of the value of education and learning;
- Low estimation of the value of tradition and local cultures for sustainable development;
- Little ability to adapt to technological and other changes;
- Poor knowledge of economic opportunities in the local environment;
- Low self-esteem and overlooked potentials; and
- Poor access to information about opportunities in the local environment.

Taking these findings as a starting point, the programme aims to improve basic skills and competences (in

literacy, numeracy and ICT) and social skills, to promote lifelong learning and develop active citizenship among unemployed and low-educated people in the countryside.

The programme offers opportunities to learn self-sufficiently and uses project work as a pedagogical approach, embedding basic skills within the topics of sustainable development and entrepreneurship by initiating an economic activity that is environmentally friendly.

### Aims and Objectives

The programme aims to:

- Raise the level of literacy skills and competences among unemployed people with low levels of education in rural parts of Slovenia;
- Evaluate and assess individual talents, potentials and resources; and
- Motivate and empower adults to start an economic activity on the basis of available resources, local traditions and sustainability.

### PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

#### Funding and Structure

The programme was approved by the Republic of Slovenia's Expert Council for Adult Education in 2005 and is accredited by the education minister. In order to qualify for public funding,

the provider organization – Ljudska univerza Velenje – had to prove it had trained teachers and premises to deliver the programme. Funding was afterwards guaranteed by the Ministry of Education and Sport and the European Social Fund, which meant the programme could be offered free of charge to participants. As the programme is part of Slovenia's active employment policy, unemployed participants are also entitled to maintenance support in the form, for example, of a living-costs allowance and a contribution to travel costs.

The rural literacy programme is a non-formal, 120-hour training programme that takes place, for the most part, in adult education centres or in venues in rural communities. Each group is made up of between 12 and 16 participants who meet twice a week for four or five months, and are mentored by two teachers who give the classes together. The groups focus initially on motivation, with a view to encouraging participants to get to know each other and assessing individual learning needs. An assessment of learning needs helps create an open and negotiated curriculum and supports the development of individual learning plans.

#### Curriculum

The programme curriculum includes basic literacy and numeracy skills, communication and social skills, learning to learn, active citizenship

and ICT skills. This is a basic framework. The exact content depends on the characteristics of local communities and the needs and interests of the learners. For example, programme content offered Velenje included:

- Entrepreneurship in the countryside;
- An introduction to various types of farm businesses;
- Applying for EU funding;
- Marketing and communication;
- National vocational qualifications; and
- Good-practice entrepreneurship visits within the local area.

## APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

The programme from the start acknowledged education as a joint enterprise and sought to ensure the full participation of learners in their learning. For instance, participants get the opportunity to see first-hand examples of good practice in rural entrepreneurship in their vicinity. The learning is considered successful only if learners actively participate in all phases of learning – from the selection of topics to planning, carrying out a project, and monitoring and evaluating their learning. As a result, the learning is variegated and multilayered, and that is embedded throughout the project, supporting participants to cooperate with each other, take responsibility and identify with the rural community. Participants therefore learn to define problems by themselves and to search for appropriate solutions to issues encountered during the learning process, while also reflecting on the decisions made. Teachers help them with their activities and individually support the development of their numeracy, literacy and ICT skills.

The motivation given at the start of the programme is crucial, particularly for vulnerable groups of adults. It is promoted through the programme's focus on the real needs of the participants. These are often related to participants' employment status and their interest in starting a business using the natural resources at their disposal.

## Teaching Material

Teaching materials are developed by teachers to reflect the needs of the learners and the learning topics. Teachers select and adapt real-life materials as sources of learning. The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education recently (2011–2014) developed an innovative teaching tool in the form of video and audio materials, based on narration and the life stories of learners (SIAE, 2013).

The use of computers and the internet is encouraged in individual projects, and the small-group approach taken by the teachers supports this. For example, learners may design their business card on the computer. Learners who lack basic ICT skills can access a special computer literacy programme free of charge.

## Recruitment and Training of Facilitators

Adult literacy teachers in Slovenia are selected by the providing institutions (adult education centres, private education institutions, secondary schools with adult learning departments). Teachers in accredited courses (and also in adult literacy courses) in Slovenia must have a university degree, a teaching/learning qualification, and experience in adult education, especially in teaching vulnerable groups of adults. As part of their continuous training, teachers on the programme must also complete the basic training programme for adult literacy teachers (lasting approximately 100 hours). The training is free of charge. Provider organisations are responsible for the first selection of teachers, since they know the needs of the target groups. They select from teachers with a strong motivation to work with vulnerable groups of adults. During their training, teachers are introduced to literacy work methodologies, and to the characteristics of the rural literacy programme, as well as to the needs and characteristics of the programme's target groups, with emphasis on the network of institutions relevant to the local environment.

The strong focus of the rural literacy programme is on environmental issues and sustainable growth, which

is why teacher training programme includes the topic 'challenges of the Slovenian countryside', with emphasis on these aspects:

- Models of sustainable development of the Slovenian countryside;
- Cultural and natural heritage;
- Family in transition;
- Teachers seeing examples of good practice first-hand during field visits as part of their training. For example, they might visit a rural development centre to learn about its emphasis on the preservation of local crafts and sustainable development.

## Enrolment of Learners

The programme's target group is low-educated unemployed people living in the Slovenian countryside who do not participate in education and learning. The programme is designed to remove both situational and dispositional barriers to participation. The providing organisation (Adult Education Centre Velenje) prepares an introduction to prospective participants in co-operation with the employment agency. Teachers introduce the programme and the content, and, when possible, former learners join them. Before it begins, the programme is introduced to relevant local organisations (such as the local chamber of agriculture and forestry and local women's groups). Provider organisations also use the local media, though this has had limited success. Experience suggests that personal introductions and word of mouth are more effective approaches. The rural literacy programme is free of charge for participants and for unemployed participants monetary contributions (transportation costs) are guaranteed.

## Assessment of Learning Outcomes

An individual learning plan is designed for each student at the beginning of the programme and a formative assessment of the agreed learning outcomes is carried out at the end. The rural literacy programme is an accredited course and participants receive a publicly recognised certificate. The Adult Education Centre Velenje validates



prior learning and participants in the rural literacy programme are encouraged to validate their knowledge and skills. Learners on the programme are also encouraged to undertake other, mostly non-formal, courses leading to national qualifications or other learning progression routes. A national evaluation of adult literacy programmes in Slovenia confirmed that the new educational needs that emerged in the course of the programme are an indication of long-term effects of the programme.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

The programme is supported by the European Social Fund which means that the Adult Education Centre Velenje must submit a report to the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, including data on various aspects of the programme (actual costs, demography of the learners, etc). During 2009–2010, the ministry commissioned a national evaluation and renewal of adult literacy programmes in Slovenia.

### IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

Between 2010 and 2013 approximately 500 low-educated adults from rural areas participated in the rural literacy programme free of charge. A national evaluation of adult literacy

programmes in 2010 revealed that the rural literacy programme contributed significantly to the learners' self-determination and participation in social activities. Three quarters (76%) of participants between 2005 and 2010 said they got to know their living environment better, while 83% thought they had a better chance to succeed in their local community, and 87% realised new opportunities for themselves within their community. Teachers reported that participants had acquired new communication, social and interpersonal skills. The most significant benefits, according to the teachers, were: new knowledge and skills, self-determination and the motivation to undertake further education (Evaluation report of adult literacy programmes in Slovenia, SIAE, 2011).

The main outcomes for participants on the programme included:

- A more positive, relevant educational experience, enabling participants to fulfill their most urgent real-life needs;
- Knowledge which is useful in everyday life;
- Positive experiences, new values and new beliefs regarding learning, all contributing to the emergence of new educational needs;
- These new educational needs are one of the most important factors contributing to the success of the

programme, bringing long-term benefits to individuals; and

- Reinforced self-determination to start small businesses.

The programme's impact on personal development is best illustrated through the story of one of the programme's participants: Mrs SM joined the programme in May 2010, attending until the end of June 2010 and completing the planned 120 hours of training. At the beginning of the programme, when participants had the chance to talk about themselves, she explained that years ago she had lost her job as a saleswoman in a shop and had been without a job ever since. Her family owns a small farm, which meets the needs of the family, but she wanted to acquire new knowledge that could be used in the preparation of domestic products (bread, baked goods, homemade meat products, herbs, etc). She said that in addition to her lack of relevant knowledge, she also lacked confidence and, above all, the courage to enter the market with her products and start selling them.

Soon after joining the programme Mrs SM defined her goal: to sell her own products at the farmers' market in Velenje. She pursued it by acquiring skills in both arithmetic (useful in costing products) and literacy (useful in drafting product descriptions, recipes, invitations and offers). On the

computer course she designed her business card and a presentation on her family's farm. She became aware that she also lacked communication skills, and knowledge of foreign languages, production and processing techniques, sales methods, and so on. After completing the programme, she took further courses and became an active member in two societies (the Society of Rural Women and the Fruit Growers' Association).

She encouraged her husband to join the programme so that he could acquire knowledge about supplementary work opportunities and obtain the permits required for supplementary activities on the farm. Finally, their efforts allowed them to sell their products at the farmers' market in Velenje and thus achieve her goal. Mrs SM still sells her products at the market. She has now expanded her choice of products to include traditional products made in her region. She and her husband acquired all the certificates and permits they needed to sell products from the farm. She is constantly exploring for new possibilities for the expansion of her business, including the sale of milk and pumpkin products. In 2011 the family farm received a special award from the Slovenian Institute for Certification in Agriculture and Silviculture for its homemade salami.

## Challenges

A major problem is the unstable funding of literacy provision in Slovenia (and the irregularity of funding from the ESF). Approximately half of the teachers are on a part-time contract. When the gaps between funding periods are too long, teachers might look for other, more secure work, which could leave the rural literacy programme with insufficient trained personnel.

The renewed adult literacy programmes, among them the rural literacy programme, will need to be implemented in a way that reflects the revised requirements of ESF funding in Slovenia.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Changes are needed to the validation of skills and competences to give the programme wider recognition and increase learners' motivation. Some steps have been taken since 2011, including the implementation of an innovative model of assessment and recognition of informal learning.

It is necessary to develop better assessment of individual educational needs and, accordingly, to improve areas of teacher training relating to the needs of learners.

## SUSTAINABILITY

Raising the level of literacy is one of the goals of the Adult Education Master Plan for the period 2014–2020. This provides a strategic policy base for future provision and development. Adult literacy provision in Slovenia is based on research findings and development work carried out over a period of time. Slovenia has been participating in the second round of PIAAC and the results will be published in May 2016. This could well trigger further development in this area, including the development of sustainable provision.

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## CONTACT

Ljudska univerza Velenje (Adult Education Centre Velenje)  
Ms Mirjana Šibanc  
Ljudska univerza Velenje, Titov trg 2,  
3320 Velenje, Slovenija  
Email: [mirjana.sibanc@lu-velenje.si](mailto:mirjana.sibanc@lu-velenje.si)  
Tel: +386 3 898 54 50  
Fax: +386 3 898 54 6  
[info@lu-velenje.si](mailto:info@lu-velenje.si)

Andragoški center Slovenije  
(Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, SIAE)  
Ms Ester Možina  
Andragoški center Slovenije  
(Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, SIAE)  
Smartinska 134a, Ljubljana. Slovenija  
Email: [Ester.Mozina@acs.si](mailto:Ester.Mozina@acs.si)  
Tel: +386 1 5842 560  
Fax: +386 1 5842 550  
[info@acs.si](mailto:info@acs.si)  
<http://www.acs.si>

## BRAZIL

# Alfabetizando com Saúde (Learning to Read and Write in Good Health)

### Implementing Organization

Curitiba City Council  
(Health Department)

### Language of Instruction

Portuguese

### Programme Partners

Curitiba Education Department;  
Foundation for Social Action;  
Curitiba Voluntary Action Centre

### Date of Inception

2004

## CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEW

The Alfabetizando com Saúde programme was initiated by the Curitiba City Council (Department of Health) in 2002 and continues to be funded by the city council's departments of Health and Education. It is an integrated programme that is built on and reinforces Curitiba's inter-sectoral (inter-departmental) collaboration between the Centre for Health Education (CES), the Department of Education's Agency of Youths and Adults (EJA) and local communities.

The programme stemmed from the realisation that improving people's literacy levels is crucial to promoting good health and functional societies. The need for literacy and health education programmes in Curitiba was underscored by several base-line studies. For example, the National Household Research (PNAD) estimated that there are over 40,000 illiterate people in the entire Curitiba metropolitan area. Furthermore, a study by the Curitiba Municipal Health Department (based on an analysis of the Hospital Discharge Surveillance System) concluded that infants born to mothers with few or no literacy skills or education were at increased risk (1.52%) of being hospitalised during the first year of

their lives than infants born to literate or educated mothers. The study thus concluded that high infant mortality rates in and around the city were associated with high rates of illiteracy among women as the principal care givers. These studies therefore recommended intensifying literacy and health education programmes.

In light of this, the "Alfabetizando com Saúde" programme was developed. Its aim is to provide adult literacy programmes that simultaneously promote health awareness, help prevent outbreaks of disease, increase environmental awareness and advocate for healthy living (nutrition).

Since its inception, the programme has received a number of accolades. In 2004, the programme was officially acknowledged by the Brazilian Ministry of Health at the 2nd National Family Health Conference. In 2007, the city of Curitiba won the "Free from Illiteracy" certificate, which indicates an illiteracy rate of less than 4%. However, despite these positive trends, the benefits of the activities currently being carried out have yet to spread to the wider population. Furthermore, levels of illiteracy and low education remain high. Hence, there is still a great demand for and need to continue with programmes that promote both literacy and health issues.

## Programme Objectives

The programme endeavours to:

- implement and promote the Council's health and adult literacy policies through effective community mobilisation programmes;
- help prevent the outbreak and spread of acute and chronic diseases as well as reduce infant mortality

rates through improved adult literacy and health education; and

- promote adult literacy as a vehicle for autonomous socio-economic empowerment as well as a means of improving people's quality of life.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Target Groups and Area of Operation

The programme targets youth and adults (male and female) aged 15 years and above – including out-of-school youth – from the fifty-five (55) Municipal Health Units in the city of Curitiba. However, most of the participants are women who remain the most socially and economically disadvantaged and vulnerable group within most communities as a result of traditional and ongoing cultural practices that deprive them of socio-economic opportunities, in general, and formal education, in particular.

## Programme Content

From the outset (2002), it was decided, for strategic reasons, that the programme should address local people's immediate health concerns. Consequently, the programme has been designed to improve literacy levels as well as to address a variety of health issues and problems that are prevalent in the city including:

- Hygiene and health issues (e.g. cancer, worm infections, leptospirosis, dengue fever, cholera, vaccination, osteoporosis, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, sexually transmitted diseases)
- Healthy eating and nutrition
- Family planning and child care
- Environment and health

- The administration of medicines

The programme is implemented with a great degree of flexibility and most lessons target current health issues and problems in the communities. For example, the first booklet (2002) focused on diseases caused by *Loxosceles reclusa* (a venomous brown spider which is very common in the city). HIV/AIDS is also included in most lectures because, despite the declining rates of AIDS infections in Curitiba, the disease still poses a major threat as peoples' sexual life styles have not changed dramatically. Furthermore, high rates of inter-city migration means that rates of AIDS infection can increase at any time. The programme's Psychosocial Units for Alcohol and Drug Addiction (CAPSad) also emphasises assistance to chemical dependents and those suffering from mental disorders. As severe social challenges, particularly poverty and unemployment, can lead to substance (drug) abuse, the programme additionally endeavours to channel the energies of the youth into productive activities.

## APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

### Training of Trainers

The programme is developed and implemented through a network of qualified community volunteer educators (facilitators) who are mobilised through the local Municipal Health Unit (UMS). These volunteers are professionally trained as community educators or facilitators through the train-the-trainer programme. This programme trains educators in basic adult education methodologies as well as covering the general programme curriculum. After the initial training, community educators participate in monthly training sessions to enable them to keep abreast with the programme and current developments in the field.

Since the inception of the programme, three hundred (300) community educators have been trained, 163 of whom have worked in the programme. As of 2008, 48 community educators were working in 31 different localities catering for



338 learners. One major challenge, however, is that community educators are not as motivated as might be expected due to the fact that they receive no remuneration for their voluntary services. The programme only provides a few educators with free tickets for public transport (offered by the Curitiba Education Department).

### Training of Participants/ Learners

Programme participants/learners are recruited by Community Health Agents (CHA) who are the link between the local Municipal Health Unit (UMS) and the wider community. Classes, with up to 20 students/learners, are held at least twice a week for two hours, although alternative and extra schedules are often arranged. Each class lasts between six and 12 months depending on the learners' performance and progress. The language of instruction is Portuguese.

Instruction materials such as booklets, audio-visual materials, educational music CDs, magazines and posters have been custom designed and professionally produced by the Curitiba Departments of Education (Youth and Adult Education sector) and Health (Health Education Centre). The contents of these educational materials reflect the communities'

social and epidemiological profile and educational (literacy) demands.

Most lessons are conducted using participatory methods such as simulations, drama, question and answer sessions and debates. These methods are built on and thus reflect the learners' daily lives. This is essential because it assists the learners, most of whom are barely literate, to better understand the issues being discussed. Furthermore, participatory methods also motivate the learners to participate actively in the learning process as they are able to integrate their personal experiences and knowledge into the "new" learning programme. The strategy as a whole re-affirms Paulo Freire's observation that: "Nobody educates anybody, as nobody educates him or herself: men and women educate each other in community, mediated by the world". In this context, the teacher (volunteer facilitator) and learners educate one another using their different experiences, knowledge and roles. This has the added advantage of building the learners' skills and self-esteem as active participants in the learning process.

A further innovative method links literacy education to practical and relevant health issues. For example, one excellent approach teaches learners the alphabet while at the same time raising their awareness of illnesses

and health risks. Hence, the letter "A" teaches them about AIDS, how it is caused, how it spreads, how to identify symptoms how to prevent it. For the letter "C", learners find out about cholesterol and what they can do to combat it. "H" stands for hypertension (high blood pressure), while "D" teaches them about diabetes, and so on. By linking the provision of basic literacy skills to the promotion of good health, the programme aims to reduce infant mortality and the misuse of medicines, and to improve the beneficiaries' health and living conditions.

## Funding and Costs

The programme is funded by the local government through the city of Curitiba (Departments of Health and Education). It is an integral part of the local government's Municipal Plan. Although the running costs fluctuate depending on the number of students/learners enrolled, the average programme costs at the time of writing were as follows:

- Total costs for the training courses per semester: R\$ 189.26 (Brazil reais) \$75.40 (US dollars)
- Total costs of equipping the classrooms: R\$ 159.83/USD 63.80
- Total monthly costs for transport tickets for the volunteers: R\$ 1,836.00/USD 732.56
- Annual cost per learner: R\$ 20.14/USD 8.00
- Approx. exchange rate: 1 USD = 2.50525 BRL

## Monitoring and Evaluation

A committee was formed to oversee the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the programme, comprising representatives from the Health Department (coordinators), a teacher specialised in Youth and Adult Education, two education professionals from the Department of Education and the Heads of the Health Units. These representatives undertake occasional visits to the communities to assess and evaluate the progress and impact of the programme on beneficiaries and their local communities. In addition, volunteer educators also submit monthly progress reports on their activities to the central

office. Furthermore, on-going field monitoring and evaluation is conducted through e-mail and telephone communication. At the end of each year, quantitative field research is carried out in order to provide a comprehensive and professional evaluation of the programme. This report is distributed to all stakeholders and helps to inform the structure and content of the programme in the following year.

## IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The following results have been noticed:

### Improvements in literacy levels of participants

At the end of their "semester" class, participants had noticeably improved their reading, writing and counting skills (literacy and numeracy). This achievement indicates that the initial demands that participants had when joining the programme had been met. The following testimonies demonstrate the joy of being literate and the attendant social benefits:

"I came to consult the doctor and needed to sign a document. The nurse noticed my difficulty and she suggested that I participate in the programme. I began to study the same day." (T. dos S. S., 42 years, UMS. Vila Leonice).

"My companion said that if I learned how to read, to write and to sign my very beautiful name, he would marry me." (D. M. S. 38 years, user of UMS Concórdia).

### Improved sense of self-esteem, identity, empowerment and positive future perspectives among learners

Participants were able to engage in other livelihood activities without asking for assistance and thus felt liberated from the yoke of illiteracy, as the following testimony shows:

A nursing auxiliary and a volunteer educator: "D. (a student enrolled in the programme) suffered from chronic depression and did not know

how to take the bus ... now that she has learned how to read, she knows how to take the right bus, she no longer stays at home all the time; instead, she visits her relatives' house more often and without depending on help from other people."

**Improvements in family and social relationships:** the programme improved the learners' social networking skills and as a result, some were able to establish functional relationships with members of the wider community. Learners use these relationships for collaborative work and general social assistance.

Volunteer educators also attested to noticeable behavioural changes in learners (e.g. reduced levels of aggressiveness) that occurred progressively during the training process.

**Changes in habits and lifestyle:** for example, a volunteer, Educatro, reported the story of a 49 year-old student with cholesterol and high triglycerides who changed her eating habits after attending the class on cholesterol and is now buying foods that reduce cholesterol as well as eating more green vegetables.

After completion of the programme, some relatives of learners suffering from psychological problems or depression (e.g. due to substance abuse) have reported changes in the learner's behaviour, such as a decrease in drug-taking and an improved ability to form functional relationships.

The linkages between health education and the provision of health services have also helped some participants to become aware (i.e. from the description of disease symptoms in class) of health problems of which they were previously unaware and to seek treatment. This was particularly true of diabetic patients who were referred for treatment and were also able to self-administer drugs.

As further testimony to its success and potential, the programme has been adapted to Mozambique and implemented there since 2006.

## Challenges and Constraints

The main challenges and constraints faced by the programme are:

- Limited resources: the programme is currently funded by the Curitiba City Council with occasional funding from outside groups such as the Rotary Club. This has hindered the expansion of the programme and has also affected the motivation of community volunteers who, despite sacrificing their time from other livelihood activities, receive no remuneration. The procurement of teaching resources is similarly affected.
- The train-the-trainer component is complicated because volunteers' educational backgrounds vary widely, making it difficult to standardise the curriculum.
- It is also difficult to motivate adults accustomed to a specific way of life to return to the classroom.
- The lack of formal accreditation potentially weakens participants' motivation and undermines the marketability of the programme.

## CONTACT

Coordinator  
Marisa Marini Giacomini  
Rua Francisco Torres, 830-Cristo Rei-CEP-80-060-130  
Curitiba-Paraná- Brazil  
Tel. 0055 41-33509428  
Fax 0055 41-3350-9320  
E-mail: [mmgiacomini@uol.com.br](mailto:mmgiacomini@uol.com.br) /  
[marisa@sms.curitiba.pr.gov.br](mailto:marisa@sms.curitiba.pr.gov.br)  
<http://www.curitiba.pr.gov.br>

## PROGRAMME SUSTAINABILITY

Despite these challenges, the programme is, nonetheless, sustainable in the long term because the running/implementation costs are very low.

This is due to:

- the commitment of members of the public as demonstrated by the outstanding and critical role played by volunteers who receive no remuneration for their work;
- the fact that programme is implemented in venues that are either cheap to rent or are provided free of charge by the community; and
- the public funding provided by Curitiba City Council for teaching materials and transport allowances for volunteers. Furthermore, the programmes are supervised, attended and evaluated by officers funded by the city council.

Moreover, there is still a huge demand from members of the community wishing to participate in training programmes.

## CHILE

# The Lifelong Learning and Training Project (Programa de Educación y Capacitación Permanente, Chilecalifica)

### Implementing Organization

Ministries of Education, Economy and Labour; National Service of Training and Employment (Servicio Nacional de Capacitación y Empleo, SENCE); Chile Foundation (Fundación Chile)

### Language of Instruction

Spanish

### Funding

Federal government and the World Bank

### Date of Inception

2002 – 2010

## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

For the past 20 years, Chile has been one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, and one of the most stable and prosperous countries in Latin America. Yet in 2002, there were still more than 4.4 million people in the country with no schooling or incomplete primary and/or secondary education. There were also almost 500,000 illiterate adults, which corresponded to 4.3% of the population. Chile has moreover faced other challenges, such as no articulation between the formal, non-formal and informal education modalities, weak links between formal education and the labour market, as well as the lack of an informational system that updates individuals on the demands of the productive sector and the offers of the educational system.

During the military dictatorship from 1973 to 1989, the government paid little attention to adult education. Rather, the federal financial investments were mainly focused on basic services targeting children and youths. Although there have been

positive changes in the investments regarding adult education since the re-establishment of democracy in the country in 1990, they are still limited when compared to formal education of children and youths. The current educational system is organised in a 12-year compulsory period comprising primary and secondary levels, and tertiary non-mandatory services. Primary schooling has two 4-year cycles, and secondary has two years of basic education, followed by two additional years where students can choose between regular (scientific-humanist), artistic and vocational training.

In order to improve Chile's human resource development and solve some of these educational shortages, the federal government developed, in 2002, a six-year pilot project known as The Lifelong Learning and Training Project (Programa de Educación y Capacitación Permanente, Chilecalifica), which was extended until 2010. Chilecalifica was an unprecedented programme in that it integrated education, work and economy by combining the efforts of three ministries – the Ministries of Education, Economy and Labour – as well as effective previous experiences from youth and adult education and job training initiatives. Its efforts were also innovative, since they went beyond the government and incorporated elements from civil society as well as from the private sector. Chilecalifica was a broad initiative that included many actions, such as adult education and a certification process to recognise labour skills.

To date, the initiatives that were designed under Chilecalifica are being implemented as part of different ministries' actions. Particularly the educational upgrade (nivelación

de estudios), which was strongly promoted by the programme, is being carried out by the Ministry of Education.

## THE PROGRAMME CHILECALIFICA

The main strategy of Chilecalifica was to implement innovative actions and promote transformations within the three different learning modes, that is, formal, non-formal and informal learning, by integrating education, work and economy. Thus, the programme set the basis for the establishment of several initiatives:

**Educational upgrade (nivelación de estudios):** created to expand the opportunity for completion of the mandatory 12 years of primary and secondary schooling in a flexible manner. This action comprised a literacy programme and a flexible adult training programme.

**Vocational training (capacitación laboural):** designed to strengthen the articulation of vocational education at secondary level with tertiary education by aligning the curriculum at both levels, integrate secondary and tertiary institutions with the labour market, and improve the quality and pertinence of pre- and in-service teacher training.

**Labour training (capacitación laboural):** designed to improve the labour skills of the youths, adults over 50 years of age, women, and unemployed individuals by increasing the funding for the National Service of Training and Employment (SENCE).

**Certification of Labour Skills (certificación de competencias labourales):** a mechanism to certify



skills-based competencies acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning. The certification process was designed to target individuals who want to enhance their employability, i.e., those who are seeking employment, or those who wish to maintain or improve current employment.

**Informational system:** a public informational system aimed at providing updated, useful information about professional and technical careers, as well as courses and opportunities offered by tertiary education institutions. The information was developed in particular to target students, workers and employers who are seeking new employment opportunities.

Chilecalifica was characterised as being a multi-stakeholder and decentralised programme, since the implementation of its initiatives was located at national and regional levels, and involved public-private partnerships. The national level was organised into two courses of action. First, the political and strategic action established the guidelines and policies on which the programme would be based, and involved the input from the highest level, such as the ministry level. Second, the coordination and execution track was in charge to coordinate, support and follow-up the implementation and

give coherence to the execution of the programme through the work of units of execution. At the regional level there was the involvement of the secretaries, who put into action the guidelines and plans previously designed. This level also included the provision of services offered by various providers, such as private schools, vocational institutions and non-profit organisations, which were selected in annual calls for tenders.

### Aims and objectives

The primary aim of Chilecalifica was to enhance Chile's social and economic development by improving employability and promoting active citizenship, i.e. facilitating the involvement of individuals in all aspects of economic and social life. More specifically, Chilecalifica endeavoured to enhance the opportunities for lifelong education and training, especially for youths and adults living in poverty, and to improve the quality and access to vocational-professional learning by:

- increasing literacy rates among youths and adults;
- increasing the percentage of youths and adults who complete primary and/or secondary education;
- aligning the curriculum between secondary vocational schools and tertiary institutions;

- articulating the learning provided in secondary and tertiary institutions with the needs and demands of the labour market;
- improving the quality and pertinence of the pre- and in-service teacher training for secondary and tertiary technical-professional education;
- increasing initiatives that apply technology to learning services;
- providing opportunities for certification of individuals' knowledge and sector-specific competencies acquired through formal and non-formal education;
- providing opportunities for individuals to acquire and/or enhance their general and sector-specific competencies and knowledge for an improved work performance and productivity.

### PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

The educational upgrading initiative was the key youth and adult educational component of Chilecalifica. It was created with the main objective of increasing coverage and educational opportunities free of charge for youths and adults. Contigo Aprendo was a national literacy campaign launched in 2003 aimed at enhancing students' social integration by teaching the basic competencies in reading comprehension, writing



and mathematics. It was designed to address the educational needs of illiterate individuals who remained marginalized in the education system. To date, the campaign is a non-traditional literacy programme that serves as an entry door for the other two adult education programmes, the regular and flexible adult education programmes. The flexible modality, established in 2002, is an acceleration programme for the completion of primary and secondary levels, created as an alternative programme to the regular modality, in order to address the working and personal needs of its participants, by providing services with a higher degree of flexibility in terms of schedule, location, and duration.

### Recruitment and training of facilitators

The minimum requirement to be a facilitator for the literacy programme Contigo Aprendo is to have at least a secondary degree, and be 18 years of age or older. Facilitators are volunteers, who receive a monthly monetary incentive of USD 120 that covers transportation expenses. They are required to attend a pre-service three-day training, called Jornada de Formación, where they learn about the literacy process, youth and adult education, and methodologies on literacy and numeracy, and take

part in an ongoing training aimed to deepen their knowledge and teaching skills. The majority of facilitators are university students and teachers, but there are also professionals from other fields, for instance community leaders. In the flexible modality, the facilitators are required to have a tertiary degree in teaching. However, there is no pre- or in-service teaching training, and in general they have no previous specialisation in adult education. Their ages range from 25 to 81 years, and the great majority of facilitators are females (55.2%). Also, most of facilitators teach at the primary level, and the fewest of these teach mathematics and philosophy.

### Enrolment of learners

Contigo Aprende targets individuals 15 years of age or older who cannot read or write, or those with less than four years of schooling. Participants are recruited within their communities through direct invitation from facilitators, and they have two months to enrol (April and May). The flexible modality targets youths and adults, aged 15–65 years, who have an incomplete primary and/or secondary education, and who seek an opportunity to improve work competencies, employability, self-image and quality of life. This modality was particularly designed to attract workers in need of educa-

tional upgrading, especially those in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The age requirement for enrolling for primary education is 15 years or older, and 18 years or older for secondary. Potential participants are mobilised through the mass media (TV, radio and internet), and regional partner organisations. The majority of participants of both the literacy programme and the flexible modality are employed youths and adults, part of the three lowest income deciles of the Chilean population, and come from urban areas. Also, an unusual characteristic of the participants is that the majority of them are females, which contradicts the trend of the regular modality and other educational services which are marked by a strong male presence. The average annual enrolment in the literacy programme and the flexible modality is 20,000 and 60,000 participants, respectively. Additionally, Chilecalifica also reached populations from the rural zones through local radio programmes using course contents from the flexible modality.

### Teaching-learning approaches and methodologies

For the literacy programme, classes are held in places that are conveniently located close to the students' residence, such as community centres, schools and churches. On



average, classes have the ratio of one facilitator per fifteen students. They use literacy and numeracy text- and workbooks, as well as materials such as dictionaries and stationery which are provided by the government. Students are required to attend classes for a minimum of six hours per week, two to three days a week during six months (June to December), but the schedule varies among different cohorts since the arrangement of the timetable is made between the facilitator and his/her students. The programme is divided into three levels, and through an initial diagnostic assessment, the facilitators assign students to the level that is in accordance with their initial skills and knowledge. When teaching literacy, the facilitators systematically work to develop four complementary abilities: oral communication, reading, writing and vocabulary expansion. When teaching numeracy, the facilitators focus on teaching numbers and the idea of quantity, grouping and interpretation of measurement units, arithmetic operations, special forms and orientation, and content interpretation, such as reading tables and graphics.

For the flexible modality, classes are offered by educational establishments, organisations providing capacity training, governmental organisations, foundations, universities, etc. Students choose the location where they want to attend classes based on the proximity of their residence or place of work. The programme starts with an initial

phase lasting six and eight months for primary and secondary education, respectively. Students are placed in the level according to their initial level as measured by a placement assessment. For those who do not pass the final exam, a reinforcement phase is also provided. This modality is divided into modules: the primary level contains 12 modules, and the secondary level has 11.

After the completion of both programmes, students are required to take a final exam in order to accredit their learning through the System of Evaluation and Certification of Studies. The exams are available on a periodic basis, they are offered by accredited schools, and are not mediated by the facilitators in order to guarantee quality assurance.

There are five types of written open-ended exams aimed to certify different education levels. For primary education, there are three exams which assess literacy, numeracy and integrated sciences, and can certify fourth, sixth and eighth grade degrees. For secondary level there are two exams which certify the completion of first or second level, and assess knowledge on mathematics, social and natural sciences and philosophy (the number and content of subjects varies per level). The objective of these exams is not only to provide accreditation to student learning, but also to track the programmes' progress and quality. The Chilean System of Evaluation and Certification of Studies has become

a model of educational accreditation among the Latin American countries.

## Funding

The total cost of all the initiatives executed under Chilecalifica, which lasted from 2002 to 2010, was USD 150 million: 75 million was a six-year term World Bank loan with a repayment period of 9.5 years, including a grace period of 7.5 years, and USD 75 million were financed by public treasury funds.

The educational upgrade initiative, particularly the flexible adult education, was designed to employ a results-based approach, where the public and private providers of the services are paid according to student performance on the certification exam. To date, the providers receive approximately USD 60.00 and USD 73.00 per student per approved module for primary and secondary levels respectively. The literacy programme pays a monthly stipend of USD 120.00 to volunteers. The cost per student equals approximately USD 160.00, and includes the stipends to facilitators, materials, trainings and the examinations for certification.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring of the educational upgrade initiative employs an information system that includes data about all students, such as class frequency and test results. The process



and results indicators used in the monitoring include, among others, enrolment rate, completion rate, repetition rate, exam no-show rate, drop-out rate, student information (e.g., gender, age, socioeconomic status), class schedule, methodology, exam results. Data are stored and analysed by the Central Level of the Ministry of Education (Nivel Central del Ministerio de Educación). The data for the monitoring process are entered into the system by the staff of the institutions which provided the education services (entidades ejecutoras), including updated information about the facilitators, student and group progress and learning, didactic activities implemented by monitors with descriptions and goals, and a monthly report. The data for monitoring results come from the written exams which students take after the completion of their studies, and are entered into the system by the accredited schools that carry out the examinations.

The evaluation is external, and designed to determine the overall effectiveness of the projects. So far, there are two available impact evaluations:

**Impact evaluation on the flexible educational upgrade modality:** carried out from 2004 to 2005 by the Economy and Development Institute (Economía y Desarrollo);

**Impact evaluation on Chilecalifica:** carried out from 2007 to 2009 by the Budget Directorate (Dirección de

Presupuestos, DIPRES) of the Ministry of Finance.

Impact studies on Chilecalifica show many positive achievements of this national programme, particularly as a result of the educational upgrade initiative.

Results from the literacy programme:

- Enrolments: approximately 90,000 individuals, of which 71.4% were women (2003–2006);
- Completion: approximately 33,000 adults (6.6% of illiterate adults) obtained a primary literacy competencies certification (2003 – 2008).
- Results from flexible adult education (2003 – 2008):
  - Enrolments: 427,861 in primary and/or secondary education;
  - Completion: 149,346 completions in primary and/or secondary education;
  - Increase in coverage: expanded enrolment in adult education by 40%, not by reducing the number of participants in the regular modality, but by increasing the participation of excluded groups such as women, unemployed and poor as well as older adults;
  - Level of satisfaction of sample of participants: 49.5% and 41.6% respectively of the students in primary and secondary levels were very satisfied with the courses.
  - Overall, Chilecalifica has produced many changes in the country through its various initiatives, which include:
    - increase in the coverage of youth and adult education, particularly among women and older adults who tend to be in the minority in the regular adult programme;
    - sustainable changes in the structure of secondary, tertiary and labour training and an increased focus on skills which are relevant to the productive sector;
    - improved income and employability of the beneficiaries of the education and training programmes, resulting in medium and long-term transformations in the country's social and economic development;
    - improved opportunities for education and training of female youths and adults. The country's statistics show that women tend to have fewer years of schooling and higher illiteracy rates, but with the educational upgrade programmes, females were more likely to participate, and the completion of their studies resulted in an increased income and employability.

## CHALLENGES

The main challenge was to establish the Lifelong Learning System (Sistema de Formación Permanente), a public policy aimed to generate a sustainable link between education and the labour market, as well as to better articulate the different levels of the education system (i.e., primary and secondary schools, and secondary vocational schools and tertiary institutions). The primary goal of this system was to allow people to have flexible learning opportunities and to provide additional alternatives to the

regular training sessions. However, by the end of Chilecalifica, this system was not institutionalised.

Other challenges include:

- the programme's monitoring and evaluation system was used primarily as a mechanism for data compilation, rather than utilising the data to improve the project's management, or to produce constant improvements and changes;
- high teacher turnover in the flexible adult programme: data from the six-year pilot showed that 75% of the teachers participated for only one year, and 91% for one or two years;
- low teacher quality, especially in the literacy programme, where many facilitators are young (18 years old or older), and do not have previous teaching experience;
- short and superficial teacher training for the literacy programme, and a lack of teacher training focused on adult education for the flexible modality;
- high rates of student drop-out: about 56% of the students enrolled in the literacy program and an average of 45% in the flexible modality; there were also many students who completed their studies, but did not attend the final examination as a result of fear and intimidation.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The following key lessons have emerged from Chilecalifica, and particularly from the educational upgrade initiative:

- a sound system of incentives, i.e., the results-based approach where implementing organisations receive payment based on students' performance, is essential for the success of an inter-sectorial programme, since it allows the management units to keep supervision at a minimum;
- partnerships established between the public and private sectors are essential because they allow a healthy competition among educational and training providers, as well as providing economic incentives;
- lifelong learning and training is crucial to promote education equity and for the development of human resource in a country with a

fast-growing global economy such as Chile;

- an adequate lifelong learning and training system requires various initiatives with a diverse set of players who function at different levels and in both public and private spheres. As a result, there is the need of a good coordination among the different ministries and actors involved, as well as an efficient monitoring and evaluation system that will inform what works and what does not work, why and where the problems are that need to be solved.
- the improvement in the articulation of technical education and training with the needs and demands of the labour market in some of the key Chilean economic sectors is crucial in order to promote higher employability and an increased income of youths and adults, as well as enhancing the country's international competitiveness.

about new opportunities on lifelong learning and technical training.

A particularly sustainable initiative implemented under Chilecalifica was the provision of educational upgrade programmes, which included the literacy campaign, flexible adult education and the certification system. These actions are now part of the adult education programme offered and financed by the Ministry of Education according to the legal decrees passed in 2009: Decrees number 211 and 257.

## CONTACT

Maria Verónica Simpson  
National Coordinator of Adult Education  
Ministry of Education  
Av. Libertador B. O'Higgins, 1371  
Santiago, Chile  
Telephone: +56 2 3904000

## SUSTAINABILITY

The initiatives designed and implemented under Chilecalifica are now being carried out by specific ministries, a fact which indicates how sustainable this programme was. Chilecalifica established two different systems which contributed to the sustainability of the programme. The systems set the basis for a conceptual framework which addressed the Chilean educational and labour challenges, as well as proposing new solutions and actions:

The National System for the Certification of Labour Skills (Sistema Nacional de Certificación de Competencias Labourales) is a system for the accreditation of labour skills in order to formally recognise individuals' non-formal, informal and formal learning in an attempt to provide an additional pathway for the completion of primary and secondary education, and

The Information System of the Labour Market and Training Provision (Sistema de Información del Mercado Laboural y de La Oferta de Formación) is a system created to provide information about the demands of the labour market, as well as informing the general population

## HAITI

# Basic Literacy and Vocational Training for Young Adults

### Implementing Organization

Department of the Secretary of State for Literacy (DSSL)

### Programme Partners

Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID), Argentinian partners

## ORGANISATION

The Department of the Secretary of State for Literacy (DSSL) is the national authority responsible for promoting literacy among the people of Haiti. Created in 1994, it implements literacy campaigns, promotes literacy by raising public awareness and carries out surveys in order to compile literacy statistics. The most recent survey of this kind was conducted in 2002-2003. Since 2006, national literacy campaigns have been launched annually by the DSSL. With a view to implementing this project, which forms part of the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE), the DSSL has received technical assistance from UNESCO and the Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID). AECID and Argentinian benefactors are the funding partners.

## CONTEXT

With a third of its population living on less than USD 2 a day and half of the population living on less than USD 1 a day (DSNCRP 2007), Haiti is undoubtedly one of the poorest countries in the Western hemisphere. A string of political crises since the 1980s and a chaotic economic situation have contributed to this state of affairs. The unemployment rate is among the highest in the Caribbean sub-region (25% according to the DSNCRP 2007). The country, which once produced and exported

fruit (mangos and bananas), coffee, cocoa, sugar cane and manufactured products (this industry once employed more than 100,000 people), is now dependent on imports for more than 50% of its consumption.

Against this background, it is unsurprising that the education system has suffered greatly in recent years. The system, which is dominated by the private sector (nearly 90% of schools are run privately), does not provide access to education for all and is one of the least effective in the continent. Poor governance is frequently cited as one of the main causes of this education problem, but the sector is also suffering from a significant lack of funding.

Over the last few years, the country seemed to be back on the road to growth and stability after the President Jean-Bertrand Aristide stepped down in 2004. However, following hurricanes and adverse tropical weather that have hit the Caribbean hard, Haiti is once again experiencing serious humanitarian problems. In addition to the tragic effects on the population, with more than 800 deaths and one million children affected, the hurricanes also had a severe impact on education infrastructures, with hundreds of schools destroyed. The hurricanes brought about a further shift in priorities in Haiti, and their effects on education will need to be evaluated over the long term.

Already beset by these problems, Haiti was rocked by a powerful earthquake in January 2010, which caused major losses of life and property and paralysed the country for the six months. Its serious economic impact and the fact that education was among the sectors worst affected mean that the literacy and training needs of adults will remain significant

over the coming years. There is a danger that the efforts made to increase literacy, which was not regarded as a priority, may slow down. This puts the country at serious risk of failing to achieve its goal of halving the adult illiteracy rate by 2015.

## PROGRAMME

With over 57% of its population aged over 13 unable to read or write (SNA-EPT 2007, Global Monitoring Report 2010), Haiti has one of the lowest literacy rates of any country in the world. This situation spurred various interventions at national level between 2001 and 2003. Unfortunately, these efforts did not lead to the desired outcomes. In the Sud-Est département, 62% of people aged over 14 are illiterate and, within the 14-30 age bracket, more than 30% of people are unable to read or write. In the arrondissement of Bainet in the Sud-Est department (the catchment area of the project) and both of the communes that it comprises, the number of illiterate people exceeds 29,000 out of a population of 100,000. These factors formed the basis for the creation of this project, which was designed and implemented by the Department of the Secretary of State for Literacy (DSSL) together with Spanish partners and UNESCO Haiti.

### General objective

One of the areas of strategic action selected by the government is the development of human resources through increased efforts in the area of education and formal and/or non-formal vocational training aimed at young people who are enrolled in schools, non-school-enrolled and/or have dropped out of school and adults. With this aim in sight, the

general objective of the project is to help implement a human resources development policy to raise the level of education of the populations, particularly those on low incomes. The strategic priorities selected to this end are (i) providing basic literacy education to illiterate populations, and (ii) providing vocational training in certain small-scale trades to enable beneficiaries to engage in income-generating activities.

### Specific objectives

- To raise the literacy rate in the Sud-Est département;
- To help more young people find work;
- To build the operational capacities of the Literacy Coordinating Body of the Sud-Est département.
- Implementation

### Selection and training of facilitators

The facilitators of the literacy training sessions are members of communities. The people chosen were those who had the required technical skills and were highly motivated to serve their communities. The 320 trainers and 23 supervisors selected by the DSSL were responsible for facilitating and supervising literacy sessions at the centres. These people were given the training that they needed to accomplish their task.

### Training of beneficiaries

Although it addresses the issue of literacy in general, this project is targeted in particular at young adults within the 14-30 age bracket in the arrondissement of Bainet, which has a total population of 6,500. This choice was based on the fact that half of the population of Haiti is aged under 31. Working towards the literacy of this group thus increases the scope for the social and professional reintegration of a very large segment of the population.

Training is delivered to beneficiaries in two stages:

The first stage of this project involves the running of literacy sessions.

With the target population already identified, the participants are selected by agreement between the various actors (DSSL, UNESCO, AECID and community representatives). Two major training drives, each lasting four months, have already taken place, and two further sessions will be held in 2010 and 2011. The first literacy drive was implemented at the end of 2007, with 5,000 people taking part. 134 literacy centres were set up and provided with equipment. The approach was based on training modules specially designed by the DSSL to cater to local realities across the area of intervention. The language of instruction is Creole, which is used by the great majority of the population. The second literacy drive, which followed the same approach, was participated in by 1,500 people. This second drive ended in December 2008. Each drive lasted five months and ended with a test.

### Literacy courses

The second stage of the project involved building the capacities of the newly-literate people through vocational training. This stage followed a study carried out in partnership with the Institut national de formation professionnelle (INFP). This study, which explored vocational training needs, made it possible to identify three key sectors: building, carpentry and cookery. Accordingly, three syllabuses and 16 learning guides were developed specifically for the purpose of training newly-literate people. Horticulture textbooks were also developed as part of the Pro-Huerta project, a supplementary initiative funded by Argentinian partners. A small group of promoters drawn from among the literacy facilitators was created and trained to support the beneficiaries of the Pro-Huerta programme in the reinforcement of their reading and writing skills. The vocational training stage of the project resulted in the training of more than 1,000 of the newly-literate people who had already received literacy training.

### Monitoring and evaluation

A participatory monitoring and evaluation system was developed to enable each stakeholder in the

project to have a clearly-defined role and take part in the process. For the literacy stage, the person with chief responsibility for monitoring is the département coordinator, who receives field reports drawn up by the supervisors and support committees in the communes of Bainet and Côtes-de-Fer. While courses are under way, the local coordinator and one member of the support committee (a local body representing the community) visit each centre twice a month and a report is drawn up on each occasion. Monthly summaries of these reports are sent to the central office of the DSSL, UNESCO and AECID via the various focal groups.

Each local or community supervisor is responsible for supervising ten (10) centres. He or she has the job of ensuring that supervision is continuous. To this end, supervisors must visit each centre at least once a week. They carry out systematic and ongoing monitoring of centre operation and facilitator attendance. They check the facilitator attendance register and regularly meet the support committee to share information.

Facilitators are in charge of centres. They are responsible for providing literacy training to the enrolled participants assigned to them by the support committee and the département coordinating body. They keep attendance registers and record absences and late arrivals of participants. They are trained to provide high-quality facilitation and instruction, while also motivating participants. Their duties also include passing on observations to local coordinators via community supervisors. They act on the feedback given to them and use it to improve training provision.

Monitoring and supervision visits are also made by focus groups and the central office (of the support committees). Regular reports are drawn up to assess the situation within each commune as regards the attendance of participants and facilitators and the quality and effectiveness of training provision.

A two-pronged evaluation system has been created. One of the evaluation methods involves setting participants two simple reading, writing and

arithmetic tests during each session. These tests are devised by the département coordinator on the basis of the specimen papers provided by the central office. The second method involves evaluation of the project by experts from UNESCO, AECID and the DSSL, institutional evaluation, and evaluation of the objectives, activities, actors and participants. A final external evaluation report is then drawn up and presented at a three-party meeting.

The vocational training courses have a duration of four months. Learners attend classes on up to three days a week. The list of requirements for learners is drawn up by the INFP in partnership with the DSSL. Each training module comprises a minimum of 40 hours of classes. A final assessment is carried out by trainers who have received prior training from INFP staff. During the training period, monitoring is carried out by the INFP and DSSL to establish how well the courses are being run. This monitoring focuses on both the quality of what is taught and also the importance attached by the trainers to the reading and writing skills required of the participants by the project. Three vocational training sessions are to be run as part of this stage of the LIFE project for a total of 500 learners.

The food autonomy strand employs 100 trained promoters, each of whom is given an evaluation kit with which to monitor the progress made by beneficiaries towards the goal of literacy. All beneficiaries are given a horticulture and livestock rearing textbook supplied by Pro-Huerta. Pro-Huerta coordination initiatives are carried out in Haiti every two months in partnership with the IICA.

## OUTCOMES

Despite the difficult circumstances in which it has been implemented, this project has yielded notable results in the communes of Bainet and Côtes-de-Fer.

With a view to sustainable capacity-building, training centres have been set up in both of the communes targeted by the project. These centres, established to host the literacy and vocational training courses

initiated by the project, will continue to be run by the DSSL as part of the national literacy campaigns it has been implementing annually since 2006. These facilities should also serve as venues for other cultural and recreational activities including future literacy efforts based on audiovisual methods that have been tailored by the DSSL to cater to the needs of Haiti. These steps should make it possible to gain the support of the local community and authorities and contribute towards the project's sustainability.

The centres have also been used as an environment in which to reinforce the literacy skills acquired by learners. These courses have been attended by a total of 6,500 people, almost 70% of whom are women. Despite the bad weather of 2008 and its disastrous aftermath, participants achieved a success rate of 36% in the final tests of the literacy sessions implemented thus far. The vocational training delivered in the skill areas identified has been taken up by 500 young people. Nearly 750 young people have received horticulture training through the Pro-Huerta project. To help learners translate the knowledge they have gained into income-generating activities, the project will attempt to establish synergies with other projects and NGOs in the domain of microlending. This, in turn, will encourage the creation of small enterprises. Along similar lines, it is also expected that the project will introduce the concepts of risk and disaster prevention through the courses delivered, given the region's extreme level of exposure to phenomena of this kind.

As part of efforts to build national capacities over the medium and long terms, a number of DSSL officers received support from the project, though these efforts were wiped out by the tragic impact of the 2010 earthquake on the DSSL in terms of loss of life and property. However, it is already envisaged that training in literacy project planning and management will be resumed once the DSSL has relocated to its new premises at the end of 2010.

## SUSTAINABILITY

Despite being a pilot initiative of relatively short duration, this project features a number of sustainable components.

The focus on a group that is vulnerable but also has enormous potential (young people aged between 14 and 30) reflects the desire to make the project last. Literacy and vocational training are seen as ways in which the target populations can identify and capitalise on their potential. The sectors on which the vocational training is focused are very well suited to the local environment and have high income generation potential. To help put theory into practice, the project will analyse and add to avenues of funding for micro-projects, which will make it possible to free the target population from the shackles of poverty and ignorance once and for all.

This project has given scope for a significant level of socio-environmental anchoring. The activities incorporated into the project have enabled the target populations to look at their environment with a critical eye. Haiti is regularly hit by climate-related and environmental disasters. The project has also brought social benefits. Particular attention was paid to the use of Creole in the development of the textbooks and training syllabuses to make the learning process quicker for the target populations and enable them to remember what is taught to them during the training.

On the institutional front, the project has boosted the strength of the DSSL by transferring technical skills, materials and equipment through the various activities developed by the project. The equipment acquired through the project, the infrastructures improved by it and the teaching materials will become the property of the DSSL. This will make the department better equipped for its annual literacy campaigns and training activities aimed at vulnerable groups in Haiti.

A second phase of the project is now in the pipeline. It will consolidate the knowledge acquired by learners during the first phase and provide training for 1,800 young people



aged between 14 and 40. Given the difficulties and experiences of the past, this second phase will begin with a better chance of achieving satisfactory results.

### INNOVATIVE ASPECTS

One of the main innovations of this project is the fact that more attention was paid to the needs of the communities in the development of a literacy curriculum. The modules and textbooks developed through the project are based on local values and the day-to-day lives and aspirations of the local communities. The operating and monitoring/evaluation mechanisms created make it possible to measure learner progress in a participatory fashion. In doing so, they also form a link between technical skills and the implementation of productive activities within the community.

The other main innovation of this project is the establishment of a direct

link between literacy and vocational training. Literacy is increasingly seen as a tool that enables communities to reflect and take action to improve their socio-economic circumstances. The link with vocational training prevents loss - through lack of practice - of the reading, writing and arithmetic skills acquired and, at the same time, enables communities to use what they have learned to organise and pursue their income-generating activities in a more effective manner.

### CHALLENGES

The training courses were halted by the deadly hurricanes of 2009. The Sud-Est département was one of the worst-affected areas. The effect of this on the project was that many participants dropped out due to safety concerns. Just under 50% of enrolled participants were able to take part in the final assessments of the second literacy session (December 2008), and only half of this group

passed. This result fell short of expectations, but could have been better if the area had not been hit by adverse weather. A special literacy session has been arranged for these beneficiaries, who had to break off their studies after a great deal of effort and for reasons beyond their control, to enable them to complete their training and obtain the certificates they have earned.

Although the destruction caused in the area was limited by comparison with that in the three départements that were hit hardest, the recent earthquake of January 2010 interrupted the vocational training session and the implementation of the other literacy sessions. The trainers and all staff involved in the project nevertheless showed their commitment and sense of responsibility, thanks to which the courses resumed in July 2010.

The other challenges encountered include the difficulty of supervising the activities under way due to the

very uneven terrain in the areas of intervention, with a lack of asphalt roads and telecommunications hampered by the generalised lack of electricity. These factors, in addition to the adverse weather conditions, are among the reasons for the low level of participation in the final assessments. The second stage, which focuses on vocational training, began in 2009 and has afforded an opportunity to address these weaknesses. Measures here have included the recruitment within the region of two training supervisors and two local agronomists. The project coordination team has also arranged for additional (catch-up) learning and assessment sessions scheduled for 2009 and 2010 so that as many participants as possible can take part in the vocational training stage that is already under way.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The main lesson to be learned from this pilot project is that the link between literacy training and the job market in Haiti needs to be strengthened, especially through the creation of job opportunities in the areas of intervention or vocational training as a means of achieving literacy. In a country like Haiti that is constantly striving towards stability, literacy appears to be one of the pillars on which economic and social development must be built.

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## CONTACT

Eugène Gélardy, Director of Planning at the Department of the Secretary of State for Literacy  
Delmas 29, angles Rue samba et

Santa  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
Telephone: 2512-3724/ 2512/3725  
Fax: 2246-9756  
Email: alddhi7@yahoo.fr, Sheahaiti@hotmail.com  
Gilles Cavaletto, Education  
Programme Officer  
UNESCO Port-au-Prince  
19 Musseau, Delmas 60  
Telephone: 29400460  
Email: g.cavaletto@unesco.org

# The Youth and Adult Literacy and Basic Education Programme (PAEBA)

**Implementing Organization**  
Ministry of Education, Peru

**Language of Instruction**  
Spanish

**Funding**  
Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID) and the Government of Peru

**Date of Inception**  
2003

## OVERVIEW

PAEBA is a regional youth and adult literacy and education initiative established in 1992 and implemented with technical and financial support from the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID). The programme was initiated at the Summit of Latin American Governments in order to address the challenges of youth and adult illiteracy and limited access to education in the region. The ultimate goal is to integrate non-formal youth and adult education into the national educational systems of participating countries.

To date, the programme has been implemented in six Latin American countries: El Salvador (1993-1998), Honduras (since 1996) Nicaragua (1997-2000); Paraguay (2000); the Dominican Republic (1993), and Peru. The latest of the six, PAEBA-Peru, was introduced in 2003, and officially carries the name Project for Institutional Strengthening of the Ministry of Education of Peru (in the Area of Adult Education). PAEBA-Peru endeavours to promote access to education for youth and adults in order to combat illiteracy among the marginalised communities.

## Context and Background

With around 29 million inhabitants, Peru is one of the most populous and multi-ethnic states in South America. Unlike other developing countries, as of 2007 approximately 76% and 24% of Peruvians lived in urban and rural areas, respectively. The Peruvian economy is diversified with, the service sector accounting for 53% of its GDP, followed by the manufacturing industry (34.8%), the extractive industries (15%) and agriculture (7%). In addition, the Peruvian economy depends to a large extent on remittances and export trade revenues.

However, despite experiencing stable economic growth in recent years, investment in the social services sector has been restricted and, as a result, poverty and social deprivation are still endemic, particularly in marginalised rural and urban communities. Recent studies estimate that about 40% of the population of Peru lives below the poverty threshold, 14% of whom live in extreme poverty (i.e. lives on less than USD 1 per day). This by extension suggests that almost half of the entire population has limited access to basic social services such as health, secure livelihoods and education. The situation has been exacerbated by increasing rates of rural to urban migration which have, on the one hand, deprived the rural areas of agricultural labour and, on the other, increased the demand on the limited social services in urban areas.

The lack of educational opportunities for socially marginalised communities is a clear indicator of the disparity between economic growth and social well-being. Although Peru offers free and compulsory pre-primary, primary and secondary education (i.e. up to 16 years), only 42.5% of the poor complete primary education, while

13.1% receive no formal education whatsoever. In addition, 12.1 % of the total adult population is illiterate. The gender disparity with regards to literacy rates is very high, with illiteracy rates of 6.3% and 17.5% for adult males and females, respectively.

High rates of adult illiteracy are partly a result of poverty, which limits poor people's access to education. The traditional system of emphasising investment in formal education at the expense of adult literacy and education programmes has, however, worsened the situation. Moreover, existing adult literacy programmes have failed to attract the adult population because they have not adequately addressed their practical needs and expectations. It was not until recently that the government's Master Plan for Literacy 2002-2012 made concerted efforts to provide sustainable educational opportunities for all and placed a special emphasis on the marginalised population in rural and urban areas. PAEBA-Peru was instituted in 2003 to complement these efforts.

## PAEBA-PERU PROGRAMME

PAEBA-Peru is a non-formal youth and adult literacy and education programme which primarily endeavours to combat illiteracy, poverty and under-development among socially marginalised Peruvian communities through the provision of basic and functional literacy skills training. The programme therefore combines literacy and numeracy learning with vocational skills training and also offers learners opportunities to transfer to the formal educational system. The ultimate goal is to institutionalise adult learning in Peru. PAEBA-Peru employs innovative training methods that include ICTs (through mobile phones) and e-learning, thus enabling



people in remote villages to access education and training opportunities.

### Aims and Objectives

PAEBA-Peru endeavours to:

- reduce illiteracy rates among youth and adults by providing non-formal basic education and opportunities for continuous learning and vocational training;
- strengthen educational institutions by means of technical support and teacher training, thereby guaranteeing the programme's sustainability;
- support social development as a means of alleviating poverty and establishing democratic practices, especially in rural areas;
- develop and edit adult education learning materials;
- support the process of educational reform, with a particular emphasis on the development of legislative frameworks and curricula for adult education; and
- foster the involvement of public and private institutions and organizations in youth and adult education.

### Programme Administration and Management

The programme's management structure consists of a central administration, a central expert team,

district committees, supervisors and facilitators. The central administration includes members of the Spanish-Peruvian Cooperation Association (AECI), and the Spanish and Peruvian Ministries of Education. The AECI is responsible for financial planning, human resources development and management, as well as for legal and public representation.

The central team of education experts is responsible for designing and developing the programme curriculum and learning materials. In addition, it trains programme coordinators and deals with public relations and communication between local PAEBA projects, educational institutions and governmental education units. It also monitors the implementation of the programme. The district committees are responsible for all activities at the local level, such as hiring, training and monitoring supervisors, dealing with infrastructural matters, enrolling learners and assessing local circumstances and beneficiaries' learning needs.

The supervisors, all of whom are experienced professionals in the adult education sector, select and train the facilitators, and monitor and evaluate the learning groups. Finally, the facilitators, who are generally education professionals who receive additional training from PAEBA, oversee learning activities at the grassroots level.

Training for all levels of programme staff takes place at least once a year. Furthermore, facilitators meet once a week to share experiences and improve their skills.

### Programme Components and Thematic Focus

PAEBA-Peru is a modular-based literacy and education programme. The modules were designed and developed by PAEBA-Peru based on learners' previous knowledge and experiences as well as their needs and expectations. The curriculum integrates both basic education and vocational training, thus offering learners opportunities for accelerated learning in order to attain primary, secondary and vocational educational qualifications. The programme content is therefore broad and covers the following:

- literacy and numeracy competencies;
- communication skills;
- vocational skills training;
- social studies (family relations, the environment and community development);
- health promotion and awareness; and
- civic education (citizenship, rights and values, interculturalism and gender).



Training is offered at three levels: 1) initial/basic, 2) intermediate and 3) advanced. There are a total of seven modules which form the basis for each of these levels of learning:

The initial/basic level consists of two consecutive modules. The modules are taught over a six-month period for a total of 120 learning hours or 10 learning hours per week. During this 'formative' level, unlike the other levels, learners are obliged to study in groups with the help of a trained facilitator. The modules offer training in reading and writing (communication skills); numeracy (logical and mathematical skills), personal development and social studies.

The intermediate level has two modules which progressively develop and reinforce the themes and skills developed during the initial/basic-level course. The modules are taught over six months and last approximately 270 learning hours, after which learners sit an examination and are awarded primary school qualifications (i.e. the same qualifications as those received by learners attending formal primary school).

The advanced level has three modules, which are taught over a period of six months and comprise 300 study hours. The advanced level offers graduates secondary education

qualifications and thus paves the way for tertiary education.

As demonstrated above, the programme enables learners to complete primary and secondary education in a period of one and a half years. Learners with little or no access to formal education are thus able to "catch up" through a programme that is tailored to their specific needs and expectations.

### Teaching: Learning Approaches and Methods

PAEBA uses a range of innovative teaching approaches and learning materials which are designed to nurture independent learning and critical thinking among learners. As a rule, learning is based on integrated and thematic modules (workbooks) for learner and teaching manuals for facilitators. Learners' workbooks are designed to facilitate progressive individual and group learning with methodological assistance from trained facilitators, either through classroom-based instruction or e-learning (i.e. the internet, e-mail and teleconferences). In addition, PAEBA has opened two daycare centres to enable women with young children to attend classes. The strategy has proved to be very popular with women and plans are underway to establish more daycare centres.

Other innovative teaching strategies and approaches used by PAEBA include:

### The Aula Mentor System

Aula Mentor is a distance learning system for youth and adults learners. Learners can enrol at any time of the year, and study anywhere they want, according to their level of skills and learning needs. Most learners can afford the enrolment fees of 20 PEN per month (approx. USD 6) and are afforded an added incentive in that they will be refunded 50% of their enrolment fees once they have successfully completed the course. Furthermore, learners are free to choose the course that best suits their needs from a range of programme courses that include business entrepreneurship, ICT skills, education and health. After enrolling in the programme, learners receive ongoing mentorship from trained tutors.

To address the challenges arising from limited access to ICTs, especially the Internet, PAEBA has opened Aula Mentor Centres (AMC) in various locations. The AMCs are equipped with computers, technical resources and didactic materials, and are open to anyone interested in learning. They also serve as community-based PAEBA learning centres where learners meet their programme tutors and supervisors. Since 2004, PAEBA-Peru



has established five AMCs, and other town councils such as Lima have expressed an interest in adopting the AMCs system to enhance their existing educational services.

#### The Aulas Móviles System

Since vocational skills cannot be taught or learned effectively using the distance or online approach, PAEBA introduced a system of mobile classrooms (Aulas Móviles), whereby a professional team of peripatetic facilitators equipped with training materials visit learners living in distant areas. For periods of two months at a time, facilitators offer training workshops to learners in a range of subjects including community development, water and sanitation, hairdressing and early childhood education.

The PAEBA system as a whole view learning not only as the acquisition of knowledge, but also – and most importantly – as a comprehensive process of human and social development during which learners gain necessary skills, attitudes and values. The role of the facilitator is essentially to guide this holistic process. Thus, in practice, adult learning endeavours to empower learners with life skills that enable them to improve their living standards and participate actively in the development of their communities.

### PROGRAMME IMPACT AND CHALLENGES

#### Impact and Achievements

The programme has had life-changing impacts on learners and their families. Since its inception, it has reported a number of key achievements:

By 2007, five years since its inception, more than 85,000 learners had attended the PAEBA programme, of whom 70% completed the initial and intermediate levels. Of the 1,500 who enrolled in the advanced level, 40% received a secondary school leaving certificate from the Ministry of Education.

The vocational training offered through the mobile classroom system has benefited 18,811 learners, with a completion/graduation rate of 74.2 %.

The Aula Mentor learning centres have catered for more than 949 students, of whom around 650 (68.5%) completed their courses.

Furthermore, PAEBA-Peru has published a range of didactic materials for adult learners as well as technical manuals for facilitators. It has also contributed towards the institutionalisation of youth and adult learning in Peru.

#### Challenges

The programme's centralised organizational structure has hampered its progress due to excessive bureaucracy and inefficient communication. In addition, the size and cost of this structure has deprived learners of valuable resources. As a result, efforts are currently underway to decentralise the administration of the programme.

When PAEBA was first established in Peru, the intention was to transfer responsibility for implementing the programme progressively to the Peruvian Ministry of Education; however, the lack of institutional capacities has delayed this process.

The programme has attracted limited funding. As a result, it has failed to attract competent professionals or to procure adequate resources. Moreover, it has also failed to train sufficient facilitators to carry out the programme's activities.

By and large, the curriculum and learning materials have been designed, developed and validated in urban environments with little communication with participants in rural areas. Consequently, both the curriculum and teaching methodologies have failed to meet the needs of rural learners.

## LESSONS LEARNED

As recommended by evaluation reports, learners must be included in the planning and development of the programme so that their needs and expectations are addressed and the sustainability of the programme guaranteed.

The concept of mobile classrooms is an innovative approach to adult learning that brings educational opportunities to the people, thus enabling learners in remote and poorly resourced communities to access education and training. For example, learners who may have been discouraged from attending literacy classes due to a lack of learning centres in the area can now easily attend mobile classes. Furthermore, mobile classes can easily be scheduled to fit in with the agricultural seasons. However, due to the higher cost of implementing mobile classrooms, this strategy requires both sufficient funding and the cooperation of all those involved in community development activities.

Programme  
Jorge Basadre 460 San Isidro – Lima  
Peru  
Tel.: +11 511 202 7000  
E-mail: francisco.gutierrez@aecid.pe / francisco.gutierrez@mepsyd.es / otc@aecid.pe

## SUSTAINABILITY

The demand for literacy and education (including vocational training) programmes is still very high in Peru. Moreover, many people who have had limited access to effective education and training are in need of accelerated learning opportunities such as those provided by PEABA-Peru. However, following the end of the first and second phases in December 2008, the programme was discontinued due to lack of interest on the part of the Peruvian Ministry of Education.

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## CONTACT

Francisco Jesús Gutiérrez Soto  
Director of the PAEBA-Peru

## URUGUAY

# Education Centres for Training and Production (CECAP)

### Implementing Organization

Ministry for Education and Culture (MEC)

### Language of Instruction

Spanish

### Date of Inception

2005–

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Difficult economic circumstances in 2002 left Uruguay with high poverty incidence rates. The entrance of a new government in 2005 led the way to the formation of a National Social Emergency Plan (PANES) which aimed to aid the citizens in situations of extreme poverty. Alongside the Plan, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) designed the National Education and Work Programme (PNET) to address the needs of young people in difficult socio-economic circumstances, who are out of work and have not achieved the basic level of education. Expanding on the models of two Education Centres for Production and Training (CECAP) constructed in the capital city, Montevideo, in 1981 and in Rivera in 1993, the programme aims to rejuvenate the educational methodology of the existing centres and build further informal education centres to extend its reach across the country.

Where formerly the objective had been to help young people return to work, the focus of the new programme has been on the progressive integration of young people into the world of employment, going beyond a narrow definition of employment to explore the ins and outs of working life. The programme aims at reshaping how the world of employment features in the lives of young people by means of a comprehensive

educational strategy. While in 2005 there were only two CECAPs (Montevideo and Rivera), in 2010, the PNET–CECAP programme was running in ten centres across Uruguay covering nine different states and offering education to over 1,300 young people who were not enrolled in the formal education system. Two additional centres will soon be set up. This strategy of extending geographical coverage was guided by a partnership approach with the local (departmental) governments which included the promotion of the relevant curricular adaptations. Rather than “constructing” new buildings, extension was inspired by the idea of utilising existing facilities in the territory on condition that they were located in central areas which were easy to access by marginalised populations. The pedagogical rationale behind this idea was that the young people had to be mobile within the community to access the learning opportunity evenly distributed around the country.

The programme attempts to provide the students with basic education, artistic skills and vocational experience through a variety of workshops and classes in order to guide the participants back to formal education whilst supporting their personal development.

## Programme Aims and Objectives

The CECAP programme is directed towards young people between the ages of 15 and 20, who have dropped out of the formal education system but have not managed to gain employment, have an incomplete basic education and have a low socio-economic background. Members of families receiving grants as part of the Equality Plan, a plan to

reduce social inequality and follow up on the achievements of the National Social Emergency Plan, are given priority for places at the centre. The programme aims to address the educational needs of the target population in a rather flexible and comprehensive manner and is guided by the following main objectives:

- To develop a comprehensive educational strategy;
- To promote social inclusion;
- To promote citizen participation;
- To support the reinsertion of young people into the formal education system;
- To offer training for employment;
- To encourage students to try out and experience new activities whilst encouraging them to make themselves heard and demonstrate their potential as an individual.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Before being assigned a place on the programme, prospective students are interviewed in order to assess their willingness to participate actively in a team, to join in with activities encouraging artistic development, cultural skills and citizenship and to find out about their existing plans to return to the formal education system. After the selection process has taken place, groups of between 15 to 20 students are formed, depending on the size of the centre.

The curriculum is structured into semesters with each learner able to complete up to four semesters at the centre. Aiming to offer a wide-ranging syllabus, the programme focuses on six areas of education which complement each other, interact and expand into a broad spectrum of educational settings (classrooms, workshops, walks, outings, talks,

etc.). The six subjects include basic skills, vocational training, classes covering aspects of work and employment, artistic and cultural expression workshops, ICT and physical education and sport.

Students commit up to 30 hours per week to classes at the centre, organised into 6 study hours per day from Monday to Friday. The ICT classes consist of activities which build on literacy skills such as writing e-mails, using a word processor, accessing internet search engines, writing a blog and creating a web page. In the first two semesters, the students take basic skills classes for four hours per week, whereas in the final two semesters this weekly total is reduced to two hours. The classes cover a range of subjects, including maths, ICT, languages and sciences, and relate directly to the content of the workshops which the students have opted for in order to captivate their interest further. Secondary school teachers are employed to lead the classes and also employ the flexible educational approach which is characteristic of the centre, turning to the students' interests and suggestions as a source for learning topics. If the students wish to pursue a certificate to confirm that they have achieved the official level of primary or basic education (three years of secondary school), they are able to sit an exam to obtain this qualification whilst attending the programme.

Having been isolated from the world of employment due to a lack of qualifications, the students are also offered the chance to try out new activities, allowing them to develop skills and discover talents which they were not aware they had. The vocational workshops which are available in the first two semesters ensure that the students can get a taster of the different areas in which they can broaden their skills and pursue employment. Some of the workshops which have been offered in the past cover the following vocational skills: cooking, construction, health and sanitation, dressmaking, carpentry, agriculture, hairdressing, beauty, percussion, visual arts and drama. In the first and second semesters, the vocational workshops and group sessions are designed to help the students decide

which training course they wish to complete during their third and fourth semesters. The training course is carried out in cooperation with the Vocational University of Uruguay. To complement the workshops, students can engage in an internship for a maximum of one semester in order to obtain more substantial work experience to support their future development.

Each week, a session is set aside for group work, during which the students work on their self-esteem and communication skills, gain knowledge of their rights and the rules of the centre, analyse and resolve conflicts within the group and evaluate the activities in which they have participated. Through the strong group ties and communication skills promoted during the course, the students explore how their individual strengths can complement those of the people around them and they can cooperate to form a collective advantage, helping the group to overcome challenges and difficulties. The group sessions are presided over by a supervisory teacher whose role it is to promote interaction and guide the students through a range of topics and modes of discussion.

The number and type of teachers who are involved in running each centre change depending on its size and capacity. However, the following team of educators are needed to support one group of students going through the four semesters of the programme: two supervisory teachers, a basic skills teacher, a vocational instructor, a computer technician, a physical education/sports teacher, three trial workshop instructors for professional training, an art teacher and two art workshop instructors. The supervisory teachers form a special element of the team, accompanying the students throughout the programme, organising the group activities and holding one-to-one meetings to provide a sufficient level of support to the students. The main tasks of the supervisory teachers include establishing and sustaining an educational relationship with the students; collecting information on the students (identifying their educational needs, selecting educational content of social value, planning and evaluating); maintaining group

discipline (posing limits, proposing sanctions, setting rules); mediating between the different resources, offers and services available and the students; teaching; and opening up spaces to encourage the students to participate, use their initiative and take the lead.

Two of the key features of the CECAP programme are its flexibility and the integrated nature of the curriculum. The students receive a more personalised, rather than authoritarian, style of education and the teachers are encouraged to foster a learning environment which accommodates such an approach. Given that not all students can participate for thirty hours each week due to having part-time jobs or family responsibilities, the flexibility at CECAP appeals to students who were unable to cope with the strict nature of the formal education system. In the case of students with additional commitments, the teachers at CECAP are adaptable and understanding, accommodating for the exceptional circumstances which characterise the students' lives and which may not necessarily be compatible with standard educational strategies. Exemplifying the teachers' involvement and flexibility, it is common for a teacher or workshop instructor at the centres to try to reach students by telephone if they are absent. Undoubtedly, rules and limits must be laid down to ensure the effectiveness of the programme. The task of setting these rules is far from easy; however, the decisions made in the centres take the individual characteristics of each student's life into consideration.

Participation and social engagement are encouraged in all areas of the programme, be that the communal lunch or the workshops themselves; every scene turns into an area in which the students can assert themselves, contradict one another and, more generally, learn to understand themselves better as part of the typical process of growing up. Each student takes part in a wide variety of activities and workshops in order to open their eyes to new possibilities and interests which had previously seemed inaccessible. Taking this into consideration, the comprehensive nature of the programme can be said to transcend a merely academic and vocationally focussed curriculum

to accommodate a broader field of learning directed at the development of the human being as a whole.

In 2008, a law was passed requiring all education centres to have a Participatory Board, consisting of parents, teachers, pupils, members of the community and representatives from the authorities. These have since been introduced into the CECAP programme and allow students, parents, teachers and neighbours be involved in decisions on such issues as the direction and teaching staff in the centre, the assignation of resources, the establishment of agreements with other organisations, and renovation and building work in the centre. Board meetings are held in order to involve the local community, parents and students in the discussion and decision-making of the centres. Students are elected by their colleagues in a secret ballot to represent the views of the student body at the meeting.

### Programme Funding

Although the programme runs mainly on government provided funds, donations and agreements with companies have supported the acquisition of educational resources and internship placements for the students. In 2011, a pilot project involving recycled paper was agreed upon with the national company DUCSA to set up a new workshop in which the students will be responsible for manufacturing the paper for the cover of the company's annual report.

The students are supported financially through the provision of breakfast and lunch at the centre, by having access to social benefits, such as a social welfare card and a family allowance, and through the receipt of a grant. At the beginning of 2011, the grant provided to each student amounted to \$600 Uruguayan pesos per month, averaging around USD 30. Designed to encourage the students to stay on their courses, the grant is stopped if they fail to attend classes and then can be restarted on their return. The students are insured through the Insurance Bank of the State (BSE) against any accident

which may occur during both the workshops and the internships.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of the programme is undertaken on an ongoing basis using the organisational structures of the programme. A major external evaluation was conducted to cover the implementation of the programme in several CECAPs (Montevideo, Rivera and Treinta y Tres) during the period of 2006 to 2008. The evaluation included interviews with 76 educators and was an important learning process that helped to provide orientation to the further programme planning. The results of this external evaluation were published in 2009.

### IMPACT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The programme has gained its most prominent achievements in the areas of encouraging citizen participation, facilitating social inclusion and offering a comprehensive educational programme. Offering the students the opportunity to develop artistic, cultural and vocational skills through workshops creates an area in which their chances of future employment can be improved and social movement can occur. In a survey of the staff, the teachers revealed that, from their perspective, the students had shown evident increases in self-esteem throughout the course. Having been very reserved at the beginning of the programme with their heads continuously down looking at the floor, the students progressed as time went on to show frequent smiles and engagement in dialogue.

By questioning the students' expectations and beliefs concerning education and work, the CECAP programme succeeds in redefining the world for young people and opens up opportunities which they had previously not considered to be accessible. Under the close and responsive guidance of the supervisory teachers, the route of each student during the four semesters of the programme resembles a steady path to empowerment and personal development which allows students

to take charge of their lives and pursue further qualifications.

In response to the question about what the CECAP programme had meant to him, one 16-year-old student – in his third semester and participating in a construction workshop – explained: "Making friends; participating; learning many new things; being myself. And I realised that I can move forward with my life."

Offering the students the chance to sit their basic education exam has resulted in astounding success with a pass rate of 98% for students who have taken classes and sat their exams at the centres. The integrated learning approach is embraced during the classes prior to the exam and the high pass rate demonstrates how this alternative teaching strategy has helped the students to learn more successfully.

The election of student representatives has been encouraged in order to allow students to assume their role fully as principal actors in the programme and accept more responsibility in the community. In September 2009, student representatives from every CECAP in the country convened for the first time, an indicator of the evolution of this style of teaching and reflecting the standing of students involved in the programme.

At the CECAP in Montevideo, order and discipline is maintained through the teaching staff and security personnel are not employed. Any insupportable behaviour or disorderly conduct results in the student concerned facing the threat of suspension from the centre. The effectiveness of the personalised approach has been heralded as a sign of the success of the centre's internal management and coordination, as well as supporting the informal nature of the teacher-student relationships.

### LESSONS LEARNED

The majority of the students explained that they left secondary education because they had to work and failed the year due to absences. In the same light, the importance of flexibility in the CECAP methodology

has become more and more evident as the programme has developed. Despite solving organisational challenges stemming from the individual needs of the students, the teachers need to be flexible on a day-to-day basis to tackle unforeseen developments, such as the case of the last minute race to collect a student without enough money for a bus in order to bring him to a drama production in which he was participating.

Even though many students have shown difficulties understanding basic educational skills, achievements have been made very quickly when the skills were linked to a concrete, tangible activity.

The special relationship developed between the students and the teachers at the CECAP can also be the source of difficulties as well as success, particularly when the time comes for the students to leave the centre. To overcome the feeling of loss or abandonment that some students and teachers may feel, several centres have embarked on end-of-year projects to address the students' departure from an educational and positive perspective. In one centre, a project titled "Leaving prints" engaged the students in activities which explored the topic of leaving, led to discussion on how the students will be remembered and encouraged positive thoughts associated with their departure.

## CHALLENGES

The two main aims of the programme which are the most challenging to achieve are helping the students to return to the formal education system and training them for the working world. There are many internal and external factors which make these objectives difficult to achieve:

The maximum duration of the programme is four terms, but in the process of interviewing the teachers, it was learned that many of the students would benefit from a longer time period in order to make the most of the specialised education which CECAP offers and to give the students the best chances for

a successful reintegration into the formal education system.

The literacy difficulties, demonstrated by many of the students, cannot be dealt with sufficiently in the few hours of basic skills classes which the students receive as part of the programme. Such difficulties can hinder the successful transferral of skills and learning in the other areas of the programme.

In addition to educating the students and developing their skills, there still remains a need to eliminate discrimination towards the CECAP students in other educational institutions. Restricting their progress, prejudices against the students form an obstacle to their pursuit of a path of continued learning after the programme. Despite completing the programme, technical schools have been reported to be unwelcoming to CECAP leavers due to rivalries and institutional distrust. Given that there are many students that are not suited to the formal secondary education system, particularly its rigidity and academic environment, it would be useful for the students' achievements at CECAP to be officially recognised even if they do not result in the student returning to formal education.

The diversity of the teaching team presents an obstacle since the activities offered differ according to the current teaching staff contracted to work at a particular centre. As a result, there are differences between the activities undertaken by students in the CECAP in one area to those of a CECAP in another region. For example, the special course through which students can train for and subsequently sit an exam confirming their completion of basic education is only available in the centres in Montevideo since 2006 and Rivera since 2008. Variances, such as this one, obstruct the establishment of a minimum common language upon which to support the activities on a national level.

Due to the range of problems which the teachers have to deal with at the centre, there is a call for a multidisciplinary team which could ease the resolution of complex difficulties faced by the students in the centre. Such clear channels of support would

be used to face typical, problematic situations, such as drug use, abuse, ill-treatment, etc. which are at present dealt with in a manner lacking the necessary professionalism.

## SUSTAINABILITY

The success and attraction of the centres have led to an increase in student enrolment (in 2011, the centre in La Paz will accept 30 students more than in 2010). To accommodate high levels of interest and ensure maximum accessibility to the programme throughout Uruguay, additional centres have been established gradually over the last few years and another centre is currently being developed. Since the CECAP programme can be found in the Equality Plan, it is to be expected that more centres will continue to be opened across Uruguay.

After completing the course, the students can decide whether they wish to continue with their secondary education or pursue professional technical courses at the UTU (Vocational University of Uruguay). Financial support in the form of a grant is offered to students who decide to continue with their high school education, providing a financial incentive for them to continue studying. Though CECAP aims to provide a well-rounded education for the students, empowering and motivating them to pursue their own educational interests, the length of the programme has been criticised as not being long enough to ensure that a sustainable reinsertion into the formal education system is successfully achieved.

## CONTACT

Jorge Camors  
Director of Non Formal Education  
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura  
Reconquista 535,  
11100 Montevideo,  
Uruguay.  
Email: [camors@mec.gub.uy](mailto:camors@mec.gub.uy)  
Isabel Alende Coordinator of PNED –  
CECAP Email: [alende@mec.gub.uy](mailto:alende@mec.gub.uy)